THE Godly Mans Ark,

OR,

City of Refuge in the Day of his DISTRESS.

Discovered in divers SERMONS:

The first of which was Preached at the Funeral of Mistress *Elizabeth Moore.*

The other four were afterwards preached, and are all of them now made publick, for the supportation and consolation of the Saints of God, in the hour of tribulation.

Hereunto are annexed Mrs. Moores *Evidences for Heaven, composed and collected by her in the time of her health, for her comfort in the time of her sickness.*

By ED. CALAMY, B.D. *late Pastor of the Church at* Aldermanbury.

The Seventh Edition corrected and amended.

London, Printed for *John Hancock* (Brother to *Eliz. Moore*) to be sold at his shop in *Popes-head Alley* in *Cornhill*.

And for *Thomas Parkhurst* at the Bible and three Crowns in *Cheapside*. 1672.

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MAY
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To thoſe of

Aldermanbury-Pariſh.

TOGETHER

With all others who attend conſtantly upon the Word of God there Preached; and more eſpecially to ſuch of them, who are admitted to partake of the Lords Supper there adminiſtred.

Beloved in the Lord:

I *Need not ſpend much time in giving you an account, how theſe* enſuing Sermons *come to be made publick. It is not* becauſe they *are more worthy than thoſe which you hear weekly; Nay, I may truly ſay (without boaſting) they are* leſs worthy *(though I think none of them much worth) than many others: It is not becauſe I deſire to be in Print; But it is*

1. *To* preſent *you with the* Pattern

of a Woman *whom God did pick out to make an example of great affliction, and great patience, that when you come into* great troubles, *you may be* comforted *with thoſe* comforts *with which ſhe was* comforted.

2. *To* acquaint *you with the* pains *ſhe took, and with her* diligence *in time of health, to make her* ſalvation ſure; *That ſo you may be provoked to lay up* ſuitable, ſeaſonable, *and* ſufficient proviſion *againſt an evil day, and not have your* Evidences for Heaven *to get in the hour of adverſity.*

It is the grand ſin of moſt people, to delay *and* prorogue *their* ſolemn preparation, for affliction *and* ſickneſs, *till they come to be* ſick, *and in* affliction: *There are many in Hell, who purpoſed to repent, but were prevented by death; therefore* Bernard *ſaith,* Good purpoſes go to Hell, and only good performances lead into Heaven.

Bona propoſita Gehennam intrant, bona opera Cœlum.

To prevent your delaying *and* deferring *to provide for* Affliction, *theſe Sermons are Printed; and to perſwade you, that whatſoever* you do for Heaven, you would do it ſpeedily, and with all your ſtrength.

The Subjects *handled are ſo plain and*

and easie, and the stile *so* rude, *and* unpolished, *that I was resolved to have buried them in perpetual oblivion, had I not been* conquered *by this following* (*together with the fore-mentioned*) consideration, *That they are* calculated only for people under great troubles; *at which times*, learned debates about Discipline, and controverted points of Divinity, painted Eloquence, and curious language, *are of very little esteem and account.* Afflicted Consciences *are oftentimes* puzled, *but never* comforted *with doubtful disputations.* Neat and elegant expressions *may skin over, but cannot* cure *Spiritual Diseases. Nothing can heal a* wounded Conscience, *and keep a man from sinking into despondency in the day of great tribulation, but a* real, right, and particular Application of the Promises; *to help a* doubting Christian *to perform this great work, there are thirteen plain* Rules *and* Directions *laid down in the following Treatise. My Prayer is, that they may prove useful and successful.*

Seneca *indeed comforts his friend* Polybius, *and perswades him to bear his afflictions patiently, because he was*

Fas tibi non eſt de fortuna conqueri ſalvo Cæſare.

the Emperors Favorite, *and tells him,* That it was not lawful for him to complain, while *Cæſar* was his Friend: *But this was but a* poor Cordial: *For* Cæſar *himſelf a little while after, was ſo miſerable, that he had not a friend to help him, much leſs was he able to help his friend.* The Word of God *affords a* better Cordial; *it bids a true Child of God not to be over-much dejected under the greateſt affliction, becauſe he is Gods Favorite; It tells him,* That it is not lawful for him to complain while God is his Friend, and the Promiſes of God his rich portion and inheritance. *Though* Job *loſt all he had, yet he* loſt nothing, *becauſe he loſt not his God, who is* All *in* All, *and they who have him, have All.*

Fas tibi non eſt de fortuna conqueri ſalvo Deo & ſalvis promiſſionibus Dei.

My purpoſe at firſt was only to have Printed the Sermon Preached at Mrs. Moores *Funeral, together with her Evidences for Heaven, collected by her in the time of her health. But the importunity of Friends hath over ſwayed me, and cauſed me to add four more, Preached immediately afterwards on the ſame Text.*

And now (Dearly Beloved) having

ving this fair opportunity to ſpeak to you in writing, give me leave to propound and lay before you ſome Cautions *and* Admonitions, *ſome* Rules *and* Directions, *for the right ordering of your lives and converſations in theſe dangerous and divided times, that ſo you may be able, after my deceaſe, to have them in perpetual remembrance.*

1. *Take heed of* miſtaking *in the* great work *of* Believing *and* Repenting. Faith *and* Repentance *are the two great* Goſpel-Graces: *And the reaſon why ſo many miſcarry to all eternity, is not for* want *of them (ſuch as they are) but upon a* pure miſtake, *in thinking they have them, when they have but a ſhadow of them. Where one goeth to Hell by* deſperation, *hundreds go thither by* Preſumption. O! quam multi cum hac vana fide, & vana ſpe ad æternos labores deſcendunt; How many thouſands go to Hell with a vain Faith, and hope of Heaven! *And therefore be much in examination, whether your Faith be right or no.* Examine your ſelves, whether ye be in the Faith, prove your own ſelves. *To be miſtaken in the great work of Believing, is to be* 2 Cor. 13. 5.

Mark 16. 16. neceſſitated to Damnation: *For* he that believes not; ſhall be Damned. *Ask your ſelves often, whether your* Repentance *be of a right ſtamp, or no? whether it be a* Repentance unto life, a repentance never to be repented of. *To be miſtaken in* purchaſing of Lands, *can but* hurt your outward Eſtates; *but to be miſtaken in the* Graces of Faith and Repentance, will undo your ſouls to all Eternity. *What the Characters of a true Faith and true Repentance are, you have frequently heard. I will not now repeat them. Only remember that* ſelf-flattery, *is* ſelf-mockery; *that* ſoul-deluſion, *is* ſoul-damnation. *Pray unto God to deliver you from that* great murderer of ſouls, *the ſin of* Preſumption.

2. *Take heed (as I have ſaid) of* delaying and putting off the great work of providing for Heaven, till ſickneſs or old-age. *The Lord Chriſt commands you,* to ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, *&c. Firſt,* before other things, *firſt,* more than other things. *You muſt ſeek after Heaven in the* firſt and chief place, *and if you ſeek it in the*

leaſt

leaſt *and* laſt place, *you will never obtain it. In matters of* weight, delay is dangerous. Abigail *made haſte to prevent* David's *fury.* Rahab *made haſte to hang out her ſcarlet-thread.* The ſalvation of your ſouls is a matter of the greateſt concernment; and to delay providing for it, is not only a ſin againſt the Command of Chriſt, but a ſleighting of the Heaven of Chriſt. *How juſtly may God deny to you (who refuſe when he calls) either* ſpace, *or* grace, *to turn to him? and ſay to you, as it is reported, he ſaid to a man, who deſired to repent in his old age,* Ubi conſumpſiſti farinam, ibi conſume furfurem; *Where you have ſpent your flower, there go ſpend your bran. Therefore let my counſel be acceptable to you; Make* Chriſt *your* unum neceſſarium, *your one thing neceſſary; and* Heaven *your* primum quærite; Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of God and its Righteouſneſs. *Say with* David, I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments. Pſal. 119. 60.

3. *Take heed of* reſting in the Miniſtry of man. *You muſt not* deſpiſe *the teachings of Orthodox Miniſters* law-

lawfully called (for he that deſpiſeth them, deſpiſeth Chriſt) *he that is above their* teachings, *is above the*
Eph. 3. 17. teachings of Chriſt, *for Chriſt teach-*
2 Cor. 5. 20. *eth by them; They are his* Ambaſſadors, *and they preach not only* in his Name, *but* in his ſtead) *yet you muſt not reſt ſatisfied with the* teachings of men, *but pray, that while the* Miniſter *ſpeaks to your* Ears, *God* wou'd ſpeak to your Hearts. *That God would fulfil that bleſſed Promiſe,* Iſa. 54. 13. And all thy Children ſhall be taught of God. *That he would give you an* Unction from the Holy
1 Joh 2. 20. One, to teach you all things. *That*
Pſal. 68. 34. *you may ſee the* goings of God in his Sanctuary, you may behold the beauty of the Lord, *and ſee his* Power
Pſa 27. 4. Pſa. 63. 2. and Glory *in his Holy Temple. In a word, That God would give you, not only the* preſence of Ordinances, *but* his Preſence in them. *That you may experimentally know, what it is to enjoy communion with God in Goſpel-Adminiſtrations:*

4. *Take heed of* formality, cuſtomarineſs, *and* careleſneſs *in the* performance of holy Duties. *He that ſerves God* carelefly, *brings a* curſe

upon

upon himſelf, inſtead of a bleſſing. *For* curſed is he that doth the work of the Lord negligently. *He that* ſerves God formally and cuſtomarily, doth not ſerve him, but mock him. *If the* Iſraelites *had brought the skin of a beaſt for ſacrifice, inſtead of a beaſt, it would have been counted a* mocking of God, *rather than a* worſhipping of him. *So do they who ſerve God* negligently and formally.

5. *Be not contented to have a* name to be godly and religious, but labour to be really ſuch as you are ſuppoſed by others to be. *Remember what Chriſt ſaith of the Church of Sardis*, That ſhe had a name to live, but was dead. Rev. 3 2. *What will it profit you to be thought by men to be godly, if God knows that you are ungodly? What will it advantage you to ſeem to go to Heaven, and yet at laſt to miſs of it? O labour to be* Chriſtians, *not only in* word, *but in* deed, *and in* truth; *not only by* outward profeſſion, *but by a* holy Converſation. *Reſt not* ſatisfied with a leſs degree of grace than that which will bring you to Heaven. *It will be a double Hell*, to go within an inch of Heaven, & yet at laſt to miſcarry,

6. *Remember*

6. *Remember what Chriſt ſaith of* Capernaum. *The* Capernaites *were not ſo bad as the* Gedarens, *who deſired Chriſt to depart from them: much leſs as the* Nazarites, *who* thruſt Chriſt out of their Coaſts. *For they heard him preach every Sabbath-day, and were aſtoniſhed at his Doctrine. And yet becauſe they did not ſincerely practice what was taught them Chriſt pronounceth a heavy doom againſt them,* Matth. 11. 23, 24 And thou *Capernaum* which art exalted unto Heaven, ſhalt be brought down to Hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in *Sodom*, it would have remained unto this day. But I ſay unto you, that it ſhall be more tollerable for the land of *Sodom* in the day of Judgment than for thee. *It is not enough to praiſe the Sermons you hear, to admire, and ſtand aſtoniſhed at the Doctrine delivered, if you* do not practiſe *what is* preached. *If you do not love* Sermons as well as hear them, *it ſhall be eaſier for* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *at the day of Judgment than for you.*

Luk. 4. 29.

Luk. 4. 32.

7. *Take heed that the* love of the world,

world, *doth not eat out the* heart of Religion, *and at last*, Religion it self out of your hearts. *Remember what the Apostle* Paul *saith*, That the love of mony is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. *And what the Apostle* John *saith*, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. *There is no sin so contrary to true Saintship, as worldly-mindedness.* A Saint is one who hath much of Heaven in him, and is much in Heaven. *A Saint is* ἄνωθεν. *one whose* original is from Heaven, *he is* born from above, *his* name is written in Heaven, *his* meditations, affections *and* conversation *is in Heaven. He is one who is* elected to things above, *and called to* partake of Heaven and eternal happiness: *And for such a man to mind earthly things, is a sin of the first magnitude. Therefore the Apostle would not have* covetousness so much as named among *Christians. There is no sin more* defiles the soul. *It will* be-smear you, *and*

1 Tim. 6. 10.

1 Joh. 2. 15.

Joh. 3. 3.

Eph. 5. 3.

make

make you ſpiritual Black-a-moors, *and* Chimney ſweepers in *Gods ſight. There is no ſin doth more* dead and dull the heart in the doing of good duties. *It hinders a man both from, and in Ordinances. The* Farmer *and*
Mat. 22. 5. Merchant *made* light of the call of Chriſt, and one went to his Farm, the other to his Merchandize. *There is no ſin will more* eclipſe the light of Gods countenance from ſhining upon you. *The* Moon *is never in the* Eclipſe, *but when the earth comes between us and the Sun. A child of God is ſeldom without the light of Gods countenance, unleſs it be through the over-much love of the world. No ſin will more* hinder your flight up to Heaven. *The* Oſtrich *cannot fly high, becauſe of the ſhortneſs of her wings.*
Gen. 33 13, 14. Jacob *was forced in his travelling towards* Canaan *to go* ſlowly *and* ſoftly, *becauſe of his multitude of children, of flocks and herds. And therefore let me again beſeech you to take* heed of worldly-mindedneſs; *this will quickly* betray you into Apoſtacy from Chriſt, and from the Truths of Chriſt. *A man who loves the world, will* (Judas-like) betray Chriſt

for

for thirty pieces. *He will part with his* Religion, *rather than with his* eſtate. *This ſin is* the root of all evil, it expoſeth a man to all temptations, *to* hurtful luſts, *to* all errors, *and* all kind of ſorrows: *It will* drown your ſouls in perdition. *He that ſeeks things* below, *ſhall have his* Heaven below. *The Apoſtle ſaith expreſly*, that they who mind earthly things, their end is damnation. *Therefore let me once again repeat it; take heed leſt you be like the* Thorny-ground. *Let not the cares, riches, and pleaſures of the World choak the good ſeed that is weekly ſown in your hearts.* 1 Tim. 6. 9. εὐκλεῖσθαι. Phil. 3. 19

8. *Let it be your* morning and evening thought *what ſhall become of you to all eternity; and labour ſo to* uſe things temporal, *as not to loſe the* things that are eternal. *Remember, that this life is a* moment upon which eternity depends; *and according as you ſpend this moment, ſo you ſhall be for ever happy, or for ever miſerable. Remember that the* pleaſures of ſin are but for a moment, but the puniſhments of ſin are everlaſting. Momentum unde pendet æternitas. Momentaneum quod delectat æternum quod cruciat.

9. Look upon Sin as the greateſt of evils, *greater than* poverty, impriſonment

ſonment, baniſhment, or death it
Anſelme. ſelf; *chuſe* the greateſt Affliction *rather than* commit the leaſt ſin. *If* Hell *were on the one ſide, and* Sin *on the other, chuſe rather* to go into Hell, *than* to ſin againſt God. *For* Sin is a greater evil *than* Hell, *becauſe it is the cauſe of* Hell, *and* more oppoſite to God (*who is the* chiefeſt good) *than* Hell. *For* God is the Author of Hell (*which he hath provided for all unbelievers, and impenitent perſons,*) *But it is* blaſphemy in the higheſt degree, to ſay, That he is the Author of ſin. Look *upon* Chriſt *as the* greateſt good, *greater than* health, wealth, liberty, *or* life. Love Chriſt *more than you* love your eſtates, *or* lives; *He that* loves Chriſt *more than the* world, *will not forſake* Chriſt *to imbrace the* world. *He that fears* ſin *more than* affliction, *will not* ſin *to avoid* affliction.

10. *Reſt not contented with that* meaſure of *grace you have attained unto*; *but labour* to grow in Grace, and in the knowledg of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: *Remember, that the Scripture doth not only perſwade you to* get into Chriſt, *but* to grow up into Chriſt;

Christ; *not only to be* Righteous, but *to be* filled with the fruits of Righteousness, &c. *Remember that saying of Christ*, To whom much is given, of them much is required. *God hath given you much, you have plentiful means of Salvation, and you have had them many years, he expects from you, not only* good fruit, *but* much good fruit; *not only* thirty-fold, *and* sixty-fold, *but an* hundred-fold. *Where* the Husbandman bestows most cost, *he expects most* fruit. *The* more a Merchant *adventures by Sea*, the greater return he looks for. *God hath done more for you, than for many others; and therefore he expects that you* should do some singular thing for him. He looks *you* should be more humble, more heavenly, more knowing than others. *If the* Sun should *give no more light than a* little Candle, *to what purpose hath God given it so much light? If you that have* Sun-like abilities *do no more good than those who have but* half your abilities, *to what purpose have you them? It is a true saying:* As our gifts increase, so must our account increase. *You shall answer at the great day, not only for your* gifts,

Eph. 4. 15. Luk. 12. 48.

Crescentibus donis crescunt rationes donorum.

gifts, *but for the meaſure of them. Remember that* God *doth not only require* ſervice *from you, but* ſervice proportionable *to the means and mercies you enjoy.*

He that hath but one Talent, *ſhall anſwer but for one; but you that have* five *or* ten Talents, *muſt be anſwerable according to the quantity, as well as the quality of them.*

11. *Labour to* diffuſe thoſe graces, which God hath given you, and to communicate them to thoſe with whom you converſe. *True Grace is of a* ſpreading nature, *and therefore compared to* leaven, *which diffuſeth it ſelf into the whole* lump; *and to* Salt, *that ſeaſoneth all thoſe things with which it is mingled. As ſoon as the wo-*
Joh. 4. 25, *man of* Samaria *had found out the* Meſ-
30. ſias, *ſhe leaves her Water-Pot, and goeth into the City, to tell* others what God had done for her. *Aſſoon*
Act. 10. *as* Cornelius *had received the* Meſſage
24. *from the* Angel, *to ſend for* Peter; *he calls together* his kinſmen and near friends, *that they, together with him,* might be made partakers of Goſpel-Grace. *A True Chriſtian is like a* Needle touched with the Load-ſtone,

ſtone. *A* Needle *(truly touched) draweth another, and that will draw another, and that another: Whoſoever hath his* heart truly touched by effectual Grace, will labour to convert others, and they others. Philip *will draw* Nathaniel, Andrew *will draw* Peter, and Peter being converted, will labour to ſtrengthen his brethren: There is a *natural inſtinct in all* creatures to make others like themſelves *(as* Fire *will* turn all things *that come near it*, into Fire) *and there is a* ſpiritual inſtinct *in all* converted Chriſtians *to* convert others. *It is as* natural *to a true Chriſtian* to make others *true Chriſtians, as it is for* a man to beget a man. *True grace is not only of a* communicative, *but of an* aſſimilating nature.

See then that you labour by ſeaſonable *and* religious admonitions, *and* exhortations, *by* communicating of experiences, and eſpecially *by the* ſhining pattern of a holy life and converſation, *to bring all thoſe with whom you converſe, unto Jeſus Chriſt.* That man hath not grace in truth, who puts it in a dark Lanthorn.

12. *Labour to be* good in your Relations,

lations, *good* Husbands, *and good* Wives, *good* Parents, *and good* Children, *good* Maſters, *and good* Servants. *Remember that that man cannot be a* good man, *who is not* good in his Relation. *He cannot be a* good Chriſtian, *who is not a* good Husband, *or a* good Child, *or a* good Father, *&c. She cannot be a* good Chriſtian, *who is not a* good Wife: *and ſo of the reſt:* And *the reaſon is, Becauſe the* ſame God who commands the Husband to love God, commands him to love his Wife; the ſame God who commands the woman to obey God, commands her to obey her Husband. *There is the ſame ſtamp of authority upon our* duties *towards our Relations, as upon* our duties *towards God; therefore be ſure to make conſcience of relative duties.*

13. *Joyn* works of mercy and charity together with your profeſſion of piety and holineſs. *For God hates a* penurious, niggardly, *and* covetous profeſſor of Religion. *Let that ſaying of* David *abide upon your hearts,* God forbid I ſhould ſerve the Lord with that which coſt me nothing.

2 Sam. 24 24. *God hates your obedience to the* firſt Table,

ble, *if it be not joyned with obedience to the* ſecond. *Works of mercy and charity are made in Scripture the touch-ſtones of the truth of our piety and holineſs.* This is pure Religion (*ſaith the* Apoſtle) and undefiled before God, and the Father, To viſit the Fatherleſs and widows in their affliction, and to keep himſelf unſpotted from the world. If any man ſay *ſaith* St. *John*) I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a lyar, for he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen? An unmerciful, and an uncharitable man, is a wicked and an ungodly man. Let it be the care of all thoſe amongſt you, who are *rich in eſtate*, to be rich in good works. *Let every man lay up* for the poor according as *God* hath proſpered him, *remembring that ſaying of Chriſt*, Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world; For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat, I was thirſty, and ye gave me drink, I was a ſtranger and ye took me in, naked and ye clothed me, I was ſick and ye viſited

Iſa. 1. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

Jam. 1. 27

1 Joh. 4. 2.

1 Cor. 16. 2.

viſited me, I was in priſon, and ye came unto me.

14. *Take heed* of ſeparating from *the* publick Aſſemblies of the Saints. *I have found by experience, that all our* Church-calamities *have* ſprung from *this* root. *He that ſeparates from the publick worſhip is like a* man tumbling down a hill, and never leaving till he comes to the bottom of it. *I could relate many ſad ſtories of perſons profeſſing godlineſs, who out of diſlike to our Church-meetings, began at firſt to ſeparate from them, and after many changes and alterations, are turned, ſome of them* Anabaptiſts, *ſome* Quakers, *ſome* Ranters, *ſome* direct Atheiſts. *But I forbear; you muſt hold* communion *with all thoſe* Churches *with which* Chriſt holds Communion; *you muſt ſeparate from the* ſins of Chriſtians, *but not from the* Ordinances of Chriſt. *Take heed of* unchurching the Churches of Chriſt; *leſt you prove* Schiſmaticks *inſtead of being true* Chriſtians.

15. *Though you never live to ſee the* times ſetled, yet labour to get your conſciences ſetled: *Pray for the* Spirit of Truth to guide you into all Truth:

Truth *in theſe erring days. Remember that ſaying of Chriſt*; If thine eye be evil thy whole body ſhall be full of darkneſs; if therefore the light that is in you be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs. *God hath given you your* underſtandings *to be the guide of the whole man. As the* Eye *is the* guide *of the body, and the* Sun *of the world, ſo is the* underſtanding *of the man; therefore you muſt in praying pray that* God *would give you a right* underſtanding in all things. *Pray not only for the grace of* Sanctification, *but of* Illumination. *Avoid as ſoul-poyſon, all Doctrines.* Mat. 6. 13.

1 *Which* tend to Liberty, *open a door to prophaneſs, and are contrary to* Godlineſs:

2 *Which hold forth a* ſuperſtitious ſtrictneſs *above what is required in the Word.*

3 *Which are* Antimagiſtratical *and* Antiminiſterial.

4 *Which lift up* corrupt Nature, *and exalt* unſanctified Reaſon.

5 *Which Preach* free Grace, *to the utter ruin of* good Works.

6 *Which leſſen the* Priviledges of Infants, *and makes their condition worſe under the* New Teſtament, *than under the* Old.

7 *Which are contrary to the* Analogy of Faith, the ten Commandements, and the Lords Prayer.

16 *Take heed leſt being* led away with the error of the wicked, you fall from your own ſtedfaſtneſs. *Take heed of a three-fold Apoſtacy:*

Of Apoſtacy.

1 In your Judgments, *from the Truths of Chriſt, and from the Faith once delivered to the Saints.*

2 In your affections, *from that ancient love, deſire and delight, which the Saints of God have had heretofore, and you your ſelves once had, in, and towards the Ordinances of Chriſt, and the godly and learned Miniſters of Chriſt.*

3 In your Converſations. *from that humble and exact walking with God in all good duties, both towards God, and man. Let me ſpeak to you in the words of the Apoſtles* Paul *and* Peter: Wherefore my beloved Brethren, be ye ſtedfaſt and unmovable, *&c.* The God of Grace who hath called you into his eternal glory by Jeſus Chriſt make you perfect, ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen and ſettle you.

17 *Remember that it is the* will of Jeſus Chriſt, *that you who partake of the* ſame

ſame word of life, *and of the* ſame Sacramental Bread and Wine, ſhould admoniſh one another, exhort one another, watch over one another, bear the burthens of one another, provoke one another to love and good works, ſeek the good of one another, and not your own good only; that you ſhould warn the unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, and ſupport the weak. *That this is your duty appears from* Coloſſ. 3. 16. Phil. 2. 4. Heb. 1. 24. Gal. 6. 1. Rom. 15. 2. Rom. 14. 7. 2 Cor. 5. 15. 1 Theſ. 5. 11, 13, 14. *The* 12 verſe *ſpeaks* of Miniſterial and authoritative admonition, but the 13 and 14 verſes, *of* fraternal and charitative. *Theſe Texts will riſe up in Judgment againſt thouſands of Chriſtians at the laſt day.* I do not ſay that you are to admoniſh none but thoſe of your own Society: Admonition is an act of Mercy; *It is* Spiritualis Eleemoſyna, ſpiritual Alms; *and you are bound by the* royal Law of Charity, *by the* Communion of Saints, *the* Communion of Churches, and communion of Natures, *to diſtribute theſe ſpiritual alms to all that need them, as* God *ſhall give occaſion:*

But this I ſay, *you ought eſpecially to admoniſh them, and watch over them. This is* novum, *though not* ſolum vinculum. *Some Divines think that one chief reaſon why the* Iſraelites *were puniſhed for* Achans ſin, *was, becauſe they did not* admoniſh him, *and* watch over him: *For the* Iſraelites *were commanded in the plural number*, Joſh: 6. 18. Keep your ſelves from the accurſed thing, &c. *He was* one of the body, and *becauſe they did not* watch over him, *they* communicated in his ſin, and in his puniſhment. *There is an excellent Law in this Nation*, That every Pariſh ſhall provide for its own poor. *And by* parity of reaſon, it is as juſt and equal, That every Congregation ſhould chiefly and eſpecially look *to the* ſouls of *their own* members, to warn them, admoniſh them, exhort them, *and* watch over them.

That you may the better diſcharge this duty, you muſt labour to be acquainted one with another, *as far as your* Callings *and* Relations *will give you leave. It is a* great and common ſin, *and much to be lamented*, That there is ſo little knowledg and acquaintance, *between thoſe that are of the ſame* Congregation.

gregation: *They* ſit in the ſame Pew together, partake of the ſame Sacrament, *and yet* converſe no more together, *than if one lived at* York, *and the other at* London: *And when they* do converſe together, *it is a* meer civil and outward converſe, as amongſt ſober Heathens: *But there is very little* Religious Society *between them, for the* ſpiritual edification one of another. *Now this muſt needs be a great ſin; For how can ye watch one another, edifie and admoniſh one another? How can you ſupport the weak, comfort the feeble-minded, if not ſpiritually acquainted one with another.*

And yet it is not my opinion, *that every member of a* Congregation *is bound to know every* Fellow member. *I believe it was not ſo in the* Church *of* Jeruſalem, *or of* Samaria. *It is* incredible, *to think that they all knew one another. I ſhould be loth to lay ſuch a* clog *upon your* conſciences, *as to ſay,* That every Maid ſervant, and Man-ſervant is bound to know, and to be acquainted with all thoſe with whom they communicate in the Lords Supper. *Indeed the* Church-Officers *are the* eyes *of the people, and are to know*

all, and to be acquainted with all. But yet notwithſtanding this: I ſay it is the duty of every Member, *to endeavour according to his* place and calling, *to grow up in ſpiritual acquaintance one with another, as God ſhall offer occaſion, and not to be ſo ſtrange and unacquainted, but to* walk in love one towards another, to bear one anothers burden, and ſo fulfill the Law of Chriſt, *Gal.* 6. 2.

And this you ought the rather to do, that ſo you may contribute *to the keeping of the* Sacrament of the Lords Supper pure in the Congregation to which you belong. *There is much complaint amongſt many (and not without juſt cauſe) of* mixt Communions, *and of an* univerſal liberty, *which ſome take in giveing the Sacrament promiſcuouſly to all that come, though groſly ignorant, and notoriouſly ſcandalous, and in making (if I may ſo ſpeak) the* Chancel-door, *as wide as the* Church-door. *This in my judgment is a great iniquity.*

1 *It is to* give holy things to Dogs, and to caſt Pearls to Swine. *It is a* prophanation *of the* Ordinance, *in giveing it to thoſe who are* viſibly unworthy *to receive it, and to whom we know*

Chriſt

Christ *would not have us to give it.*

2 *It is an* act of great uncharitableneſs, *to thoſe who are groſly ignorant, and ſcandalous; for it is to give them that which we know will further their* damnation.

3 *It makes the* Church-Officers *(who have power to hinder them, and do not uſe it)* partake of other mens ſins.

4 *It is an Act of* cruelty *to the* Nation: *For becauſe we have been* Prodigal of Chriſts blood, *therefore he hath been* Prodigal of ours.

5. *It is a great* ſcandal to the truly godly, *and* a ſtumbling-block to weak Chriſtians, *cauſing them (though unadviſedly) to ſeparate from our Congregations.*

6 *It is to* walk contrary *to the practiſe of moſt (if not all) of the* Churches of Chriſt *in the Chriſtian world:*

To prevent this Sacrament-prophanation, *there are ſome* Miniſters, *who wholly ſurceaſe from adminiſtring it: This I allow not, unleſs in caſe of abſolute neceſſity; For this is (as it were) to* ſuſpend the whole Congregation, *and to deny* Children *their* bread, *for fear of giving* it to Dogs. *The beſt way is to follow the advice which our* Lord

Jeſus Chriſt *gives*, Mat. 18.15, 16, 17. *where he propounds* Rules *and* Directions *for the removing of Scandals out of the Church.* If thy Brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee (*ſaith Chriſt*) go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: *He doth not ſay*, Go and ſeparate preſently (*for this is to* rend the Church, *not to* heal it; *this is to* hinder thy Brother from Chriſt, *rather than to* gain him to Chriſt:) *He doth not ſay*, Go and tell others (*for this is to* back-bite thy Brother; *this is to* reproach *him*, *rather than to* reprove *him*) But *he ſaith*, Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother: But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, &c. And if he ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church, (*that is, to ſuch who are impowred by Chriſt to redreſs offences*) but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him, &c. *Hence learn*,

That all Church-reformation, *and* Sacrament-purity *muſt begin from* Church-members, *and proceed from them in Chriſts* way *unto* Church-Officers; That if any man who is called

a Brother, be a Fornicator, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or guilty of any other Scandalous ſin, *It is your duty, who are members of the ſame body with him, and know his guiltineſs, to labour by* private admonition to gain him to God; *not to* ſhame him *by telling others, but to* gain him, *by telling him alone. But if he will not hear you, then you are in* an orderly way *to bring it to the* Church, *which if you* neglect to do, *the ſin of* Church pollution *is your* ſin, *and not the* ſin *of your* Church-Officers. *If there be* three doors *to get into an houſe, he that keeps me out of the* firſt, *keeps me out of the* other two. *All* Sacrament-reformation *begins with you*, you are the firſt door at which it enters; *if you fail of your duty, the ſin lyeth at your door, not at ours. It is the cuſtom of all people (though otherwiſe Godly) if a* ſcandalous ſinner *be admitted to the* Lords-Supper, *to charge the ſin of it upon the Miniſter, and in the meantime to forget that the ſin is* theirs, *not* his, *becauſe they have not done what* Chriſt *would have them, for the* gaining of him, *and for the* inabling *of the* Church, *to proceed againſt him.*

by cenſures, if he *prove obſtinate.* The Lord *give you hearts to think of this,* and give you grace *(inſtead of murmuring againſt, and complaining of mixt communions, and of ſeparating from us becauſe of them) to* contribute *your utmoſt towards the* purging of our *Congregations, and* to practiſe *all thoſe duties which* Chriſt *requires of you in order thereunto.*

I have much more to ſay of this particular, but I perceive that the Epiſtle ſwells to too great a bigneſs, and therefore I ſhall defer what I have further to ſay, till God ſhall offer me another ſuch opportunity.

18 *Labour to maintain* Peace and
Pſal. 133. Unity *amongſt your ſelves.* It is a good and pleaſant thing for Brethren to dwell together in Unity. Have ſalt in
Mar. 9 50. your ſelves, and peace one with another. *Labour to get your ſouls* ſeaſoned *with the* grace of humility, ſelf denial, *and* mortification; *and this will keep you in peace; Remember the ſaying of Chriſt,* Bleſſed are the Peacemakers. Now I beſeech you Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye all ſpeak the ſame thing, and that there be no diviſions

amo ng

among you, but that ye be perfectly joyned together in the ſame mind, and in the ſame judgment.

19 *Study often and often the* quatuor noviſſima, *the four laſt things*, Death, Judgment, Hell, and Heaven. *The* meditation *of* death *will* prepare you for death: *The* meditation of Heaven *will* make you Heavenly-minded: *The* meditation of Hell *will* keep you from Hell: *Therefore* Bernard *perſwades us* to go often down to Hell by meditation while we live, and we ſhall not go down to it when we die. *The* meditation *of the* day *of* Judgment, *will be both* frænum & calcar, *a* bridle *to curb you from ſin, and a* ſpur *to incite you to all godlineſs, that ſo you may give up your account with joy, at that terrible day.*

20 *Study the* exceeding great and precious Promiſes *of the Goſpels make a* Catalogue *of them*, meditate *on them, and labour to apply them to your own ſouls, for your everlaſting comfort. And for this purpoſe, read over theſe Sermons, and ſtudy them in time of health, that you may enjoy the benefit of them in the time of ſickneſs.*

Laſtly, *Let me intreat you to* praiſe God

God *in my behalf*; *that he hath been pleaſed out of his free love to uphold me amongſt you in my* Miniſterial imployment *for theſe eighteen years*; *And to continue your earneſt Prayers unto him, that he would make my labours more* uſeful *and* ſucceſsful; *that he would* guide me, *that I may* guide you; *that he would not only* make, *but* keep *me* faithful *in theſe back-ſliding times, and teach me* ſo to preach, and ſo to live, that I may ſave my ſelf and thoſe that hear me.

Your Servant in the
Work of the Miniſtry,

Ed. Calamy.



THE

THE GODLY MAN'S ARK, OR, City of Refuge in the day of his diſtreſs.

SERMON I.

Pſal. 119. 92.

Unleſs thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine affliction.

THis Pſalm (out of which my Text is taken) exceeds all the other *Pſalms*, not only in *length*, but in *excellency*, ſo far (in the judgment of *Ambroſe*) as the light of the *Sun* excels the light of the *Moon*. As the Book of Pſalms is ſtiled by *Luther*, An *Epitome of the Bible*, or a *little Bible*:

So

So may this Pſalm fitly be called, *A Good Epitome of the Book of Pſalms.* It was written (as is thought) by *David* in the days of his baniſhment under *Saul*, but ſo penned, that the word thereof ſuits the condition of all Saints. It is *penu doctrinæ publicum unicuique apta & convenientia diſtribuens*, *A publick ſtore-houſe* of heavenly doctrines, diſtributing fit and convenient inſtructions to all the people of God; and therefore ſhould be in no leſs account with thoſe who are ſpiritually alive, than is the uſe of the *Sun*, *Air*, and *Fire*, with thoſe who are naturally alive: It is divided into two and twenty *Sections*, according to the *Hebrew Alphabet*, and therefore fitly called, *A holy Alphabet for Sions Scholars*; the A: B. C. *of godlineſs*. *Sixtus Senenſis* calls it, *An Alphabetical Poem.* The *Jews* are ſaid to teach it their little Children the firſt thing they learn, and therein they take a very right courſe, both in regard of the heavenly matter, and plain ſtile fitted for all capacities. The chief ſcope of it, is to ſet out the glorious *excellencies* and *perfections of the Law of God.*

30 65 MAY

ed, *God.* There is not a verſe (except
It w one only, ſay ſome learned men, in
vid print, but are therein deceived, but
und may truly ſay, Except the 122. and
wor the 90. verſes) in this long Pſalm,
of a wherein there is not mention made
blicu of the Law of God, under the
tribu name of Law, or Statutes, or Pre-
ven cepts, or Teſtimonies, or Command-
and ments, or Ordinances, or Word, or
the Promiſes, or Ways, or Judgments,
ould or Name, or Righteouſneſs, or Truth,
who *&c.*
uſe This Text that I have choſen, ſets
vith out the great benefit and comfort
t is which *David* found in the Law of
fli- God in the time of his affliction-----
ba- *It kept him from periſhing. Had not thy*
A *Law been my delights, I had periſhed*
he *in my affliction.*
e- The word *Law* is taken diverſly
n. in Scripture, ſometimes for the
ir *Moral Law*, *James* 2. 10. Some-
y times for the whole *Oeconomy*, *Polity*,
y and *Regiment* of *Moſes*, for the
e whole *Moſaical diſpenſation*, by Laws
partly Moral, partly Judicial, part-
ly Ceremonial, *Gal.* 3. 23. Some-
times for the *Five Books of Moſes*,
Luke 24. 44. Sometimes for the
whole

whole *Doctrine of God* contained in the *Scriptures of the Old Teſtament*, *Joh.* 7. 49. By Law in this place is meant, all thoſe Books of the Scripture which were written when this Pſalm was penned. But I ſhall handle it in a larger ſenſe, as it comprehends all the Books both of the Old and New Teſtament. For the word *Law* is ſometimes alſo taken for the *Goſpel*, as it is *Micah* 4. 2. *Iſa.* 2. 3. The meaning then is, *Unleſs thy Law*, that is, *Thy Word, had been my delights, I ſhould have periſhed in mine affliction.*

David ſpeaks this (ſaith *Muſculus*) of the diſtreſſed condition he was in when perſecuted by *Saul*, forced to fly to the *Philiſtines*, and ſometimes to hide himſelf in the rocks and caves of the earth. *Hic vero ſimile eſt, fuiſſe illi ad manum codicem divinæ legis*, &c. It is very likely (ſaith he) that he had the Book of Gods Law with him, by the reading of which he mitigated and allayed his ſorrows, and kept himſelf pure from communicating with the Heathen in their ſuperſtitions. The *Greek* Scholiaſts ſay, That *David* uttered theſe words, *A Saule pulſus*,

pulsus, & apud Philistæos & impios homines agere coactus, when driven from *Saul*, and compelled to live amongst the wicked *Philistines*, &c. for he would have been allured to have communicated with them in their impieties, had he not carried about him the meditation of the Word of God. *Unless thy Law had been my delights*, &c.

In the words themselues, we have two Truths *supposed*, and one Truth clearly *proposed*.

1 Two Truths supposed.
  1 *That the deerest of Gods Saints are subject to many great and tedious afflictions.*
  2 *That the Word of God is the Saints darling and delights.*

One Truth clearly proposed.
  That the Law of God delighted in, is the afflicted Saints Antidote against ruin, and destruction.

1 Two Truths supposed.
  The first is this:

Doct. 1. *That the best of Gods Saints are in this life subject to many great and tedious afflictions.*

David

David was a man after Gods own heart, and yet he was a man made up of troubles of all ſorts and ſizes, inſomuch as he profeſſeth of himſelf, *Pſal.* 69. 1, 2, 3. *Save me O God, for the waters are come in unto my Soul, I ſink in deep mire, where there is no ſtanding; I am come into deep waters, where the floods over-flow me; I am weary of my crying, my throat is dried, mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.* And in this Text he profeſſeth that his afflictions were ſo great, that he muſt neceſſarily have periſhed under them, had he not been ſuſtained by the powerful comforts he fetched out of the Word. There is an Emphaſis in the word *Then*, *I ſhould then have periſhed*; That is, long before this time; *then*, *when* I was afflicted, then I ſhould have periſhed. *Junius* and *Tremelius* tranſlate it, *Jam diu periiſſem*, &c. I ſhould long ago have periſhed. *Job* was a man eminent for godlineſs; and yet as eminent for afflictions. Nay Jeſus Chriſt himſelf *was a man of ſorrows*, Iſa. 53. 3. Inſomuch as that it is truly ſaid, *God had one Son without ſin, but no Son without ſorrow.*

This

This our *dear Sister*, at whose Funeral we are met, was a woman full of many and great afflictions, which (no doubt) would have quite drowned and swallowed her up, had not the *Word of God* supported her; therefore it was that she desired that this Text might be the subject of her Funeral Sermon.

Quest. *But why doth God afflict his own Children with such variety of long and great afflictions?*

Answ. 1. God doth not do this, because he *hates* them, but because he *loves* them, *For whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth*, &c. *Heb.* 12.6. Did the Lord hate them, he would suffer them to go merrily to hell. *There is no surer sign of Gods reprobating anger, than to suffer a man to prosper in wicked courses.* God threatneth this as the greatest *punishment, not to punish them*, Hos. 4. 14. And therefore because God loveth his Children, *he chastiseth them in this world, that they may not be condemned in the world to come*, 1 Cor. 11. 33.

2. God doth not do this, because he would *hurt* them, but for their *good*, Jer. 24. 5. The *good Figs* were

were ſent into captivity for their *good*. Hebr. 12. 10. *He for our profit*, &c. God hath very gracious and merciful ends and aims in afflicting his people. Give me leave here to inlarge my diſcourſe, and to give you an account of ſome of theſe divine aims.

1 Gods deſign is to teach us to *know him* and *to truſt in him*, and *to know our ſelves*. It is a true ſaying of *Luther*, *Schola crucis eſt Schola lucis*, the School of *Affliction* is a School of *Inſtruction*; Gods παθήματα, are μαθήματα: His *rods* (when ſanctified) are powerful *Sermons* to teach us,

1. *To know God*: And *this is life eternal to know him*, John 17. 3. It is ſaid of *Manaſſeh*, 2 Chron. 33. 13. *Then Manaſſeh knew that the Lord he was God*. Then, when he was caught among the thorns, bound with fetters, and carryed to *Babylon*; before that time he knew not the Lord: Afflictions teach us to know God, and not only in his power and greatneſs, in his anger and hatred againſt ſin, but alſo in his goodneſs and mercy: For *God* doth

doth ſo *ſweeten* the bitter cup of affliction, that a Child of God doth many times taſte more of God's love in one months affliction, than in many years of proſperity; 2 *Cor.* 1. 4, 5. 2 *Cor.* 7. 4. Add to this, Afflictions teach us to know God *experimentally* and *affectionatively*, not *celebraliter*, (as *Calvin* ſaith) but *cordialiter*, ſo to know him, as to *love* and *fear* him, and to *fly* unto him as our Rock and hiding-place in the day of our diſtreſs. It is ſaid, *Cant.* 3. 1. *By night I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth, &c.* Some by the word *Night*, underſtand the night of divine deſertion; and from the words, *Gilbertus* hath this ſaying; *Qui quærit in nocte, non quærit ut videat, ſed ut amplectatur*; He that ſeeks after God in the night of adverſity, doth not ſeek to ſee him, and know him formally and ſuperficially, but to embrace him, and to love him really and cordially. And therefore the Church never left till ſhe had found *Chriſt*, and when ſhe had found him, ſhe *held him*, and would not let him go, *Cant.* 3. 2, 3, 4.

2. Not only to know God, but alſo to truſt in him, 2 *Cor.* 1. 9. *We had the ſentence of death in our ſelves, that we ſhould not truſt in our ſelves, but in God, which raiſeth the dead.* Note here, 1 That an Apoſtle is apt in time of proſperity, to truſt in himſelf. 2 That God brings his Children to the gates of death, that they might learn not to truſt in themſelves, but in God which *raiſeth the dead*, that is, from a dead and deſperate condition.

3 Not only to know God, but to know our ſelves, which two are the chief parts of Chriſtian Religion: It is ſaid of the Prodigal, that when he was in adverſity, then he *came to himſelf*, Luke 15. 17. *And when he came to himſelf:* He was *ſpiritually diſtracted*, when he was in *proſperity*. Afflictions teach us to know that we are but *men*, according to that of *David*, Pſal. 9. 20, *Put them in fear, O Lord, that they may know themſelves to be but men.* *Caligula* and *Domitian*, Emperours of *Rome*, who in proſperity would be called Gods, when it thundered from Heaven were ſo terrified, that

that then they knew they were but men. In proſperity we forget our mortality. Adverſity cauſeth us to know, not only that we are men, but frail men, that God hath us *between his hands*, (as it is *Ezek.* 21. 17.) and can as eaſily cruſh us, as we do moths; That we are in *Gods hands, as the clay in the hands of the Potter*; That he hath an abſolute ſoveraignty over us, and that we depend upon him for our being, well-being, and eternal-being; theſe things we know feelingly and practically in the day of affliction: And it much concerns us to know theſe things, and to know them powerfully; for this will make us ſtand in awe of God, and ſtudy to ſerve and pleaſe him. He that depends upon a man for his livelyhood, knowing that he hath him at an advantage, and can eaſily undo him, will certainly endeavour to comply with him, and to obtain his favour. *The ground of all ſervice and obedience is dependance.* And did we really and experimentally know our dependance upon God, and the advantages he hath

us

us that, we could not, we would not but comply with him, and labour above all things to gain his love and favour.

2 Gods aim in afflicting his children, is either to *keep them from sin*; or when they have sinned, *to bring them to repentance for it, and from it.*

1 *To keep them from sin*; This made him send an *Angel of Satan* to buffet *Paul*, lest he should be *be lifted up in pride, and exalted above measure*, 2 Cor. 12. 7.

The second Design of God in afflicting his Children.

2 When they have sinned, to bring them to *repentance for it, and from it.* God brings his children *low*, not to *trample* upon them, but to make them *low in their own eyes*, and to *humble* them for sin, *Deut.* 8. 2. God brings them into the *deep waters*, not to *drown* them, but to *wash* and *cleanse* them. *Isa.* 27 9. *By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away sin, &c.* Afflictions (when sanctified) are divine hammers to break, and as *Moses* his Rod, to cleave our rocky hearts in pieces.

1 They open the eyes to see sin, *Oculos quos culpa claudit, pœna aperit.*

When

When the Brethren of *Joſeph* were in adverſity, then they ſaw (and not before) the greatneſs of their ſin in ſelling their Brother, *Gen.* 42. 21.

They open the *ear to diſcipline.* In proſperity we turn a deaf ear to the voice of the Charmer, though he charm never ſo wiſely. But adverſity openeth the ear, and cauſeth us to attend: When God ſpake upon Mount *Sinah* in a terrible manner, then the people ſaid unto *Moſes: Speak thou unto us, all that the Lord our God ſhall ſpeak unto thee, and we will hear it, and do it*, Deut. 5. 27. Memorable is that Text, Jer. 2. 24. *A wild Aſs uſed to the Wilderneſs, that ſnuffeth up the wind at her pleaſure, in her occaſion who can turn her away? all they that ſeek her, will not weary themſelves, in her month they ſhall find her; in her month*, that is, when ſhe is great with young, and near her time. A wicked man in the day of his proſperity, is like a wild Aſs uſed to the wilderneſs, he ſnuffeth at any that ſhall reprove him, he is of an uncircumciſed ear, and a rebellious heart; *but in his month*, that is, when he is *big*

with afflictions, then he will be easily found; this will open his ear to discipline.

3. They will open the *mouth to confess sin*, Jud. 10. 15.

4 They will *command us to depart from iniquity*, Job 36. 8 9, 10.

Afflictions are *Gods Furnaces*, to purge out the drosse of our sins, *Gods Files* to pare off our spiritual rust, *Gods Fans* to winnow out our chaff. In prosperity we gather much soil, but adversity purgeth and purifieth us. This is its proper work, to work out unrighteousness, *Dan.* 11. 35. *Dan.* 12. 10.

The third Design. 3 Gods end is not only to keep us from sin, but to make us *holy and righteous*; therefore it is said, Isa. 26. 9. *When thy Judgments are in the earth, the Inhabitants of the world will learn Righteousness.* And Heb. 12. 10. *He for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness.* As the waters that drowned the old world, did not hurt the Ark of *Noah*, but bare it up above the earth; and as they increased, so the Ark was lifted up nearer and nearer to Heaven: So *Afflictions* (when

(when ſanctified) do not prejudice the Saints of God, but lift them up nearer unto God in *Holineſs*, *and Heavenly-mindedneſs*.

4 Gods deſign in afflicting his children, is to make the *World bitter* unto them, and *Chriſt ſweet*. The fourth Deſign.

1 To *imbitter the World*: There are two lame leggs upon which all worldly things ſtand, *uncertainty* and *inſufficiency*. All earthly things are like the earth, founded upon nothing; they are like *heaps made of wax*, that quickly melt away. Riches, and Honours, Wife and Children, have *wings and fly away*; they are like unto *Abſaloms* Mule, they will fail us when we have moſt need of them; They may *puff up* the ſoul, but they cannot *ſatisfie it*, *inflare poſſunt, ſatiare animam non poſſunt*: They are all vanity and vexation of ſpirit, ſo ſaith the *Preacher*: but moſt people in time of health, will not believe theſe things; but when ſome great ſickneſs betides them, this is as a *real Sermon*, to make out the truth of them; then they ſee, that a *Velvet ſlipper* cannot cure the Gout, nor a *Golden cap*

the head ach, *Prov.* 10. 14. That riches avail not in the day of wrath; and this imbitters the world.

2 To make *Chriſt ſweet and precious.* When *Chriſt* and his *Diſciples* were in a ſhip together, *Mat.* 8. 25. it is ſaid, *That Chriſt was aſleep*; and as long as the Sea was calm, his Diſciples ſuffered him to ſleep, but when they were ready to be drowned, then they *awake Chriſt*; and ſaid, *Maſter, ſave us, we periſh.* Even the beſt of Saints when fatted with outward plenty and abundance, are prone to ſuffer *Chriſt to lie aſleep within them*, and ſo neglect the lively actings of faith upon *Chriſt*; but when the ſtorms of affliction, and outward calamity begin to ariſe, and they are ready to be over-whelmed with diſtreſſes, then *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt.*

5 Gods deſign in afflicting his children, 'tis to *prove* and *improve* their graces.

1 To *prove* their graces, *Rev.* 2. 10. *Deut.* 8. 2. to prove the *truth*, and the *ſtrength* of them. 1 The *truth and ſincerity of their graces*; For this cauſe he loaded *Job* with afflictions

ctions, to try whether he ſerved God for his Camels and Oxen, or for love to God. As *Solomons* ſword tried the *true Mother* from the *falſe*; So the *Sword* of affliction diſcovers the ſincere Chriſtian from the hypocrite. Diſtreſſes are *divine Touch-ſtones*, to try whether we be true or counterfeit Saints; *That grace is true, which upon trial is found true.* 2 To try the ſtrength of our *Graces*: For it requires a ſtrong faith to endure great afflictions. That faith which will ſuffice for a little affliction, will not ſuffice for a great one. *Peter* had faith enough to come to Chriſt upon the Sea, but as ſoon as the ſtorm began to ariſe, his faith began to fail, and Chriſt ſaid: *Why art thou afraid, O thou of little faith?* Math. 14. 30, 31. It muſt be a *ſtrong Faith* that muſt keep us from ſinking in the day of *great diſtreſs.*

2 To *Improve our Graces.* It is reported of the *Lioneſs*, that ſhe leaves her young ones, till they have almoſt killed themſelves with roaring and howling, and then at laſt gaſp, ſhe relieves them, and by

this means they become more courageous. So God brings his children into the deeps, and suffers *Jonah* to be three days and three nights in the belly of the Whale, and *David* to cry till his throat was *dry*, Psalm 69. 3. and suffers his Apostles to be all the night in a great storm till the fourth watch, and then he comes and rebukes the winds, and by this means he mightily increaseth their *patience* and *dependance* upon God, and their Faith in Christ. As the *Palm tree*, the more it is depressed, the higher stronger, and fruitfuller it grows; So doth the graces of God people.

Lastly, Gods aim in afflicting his people, is to *put an edg upon their prayers, and all their other holy services.*

1 Upon *Prayer*: What a famous Prayer did *Manasseh* make, when he was under his Iron-Fetters. It is thrice mentioned, 2 *Chron* 33 13, 18, 19. When *Paul* was struck off his horse, and struck with blindness, then he prayed to purpose. Therefore it is said, *Acts* 9. 11. *Behold he prayeth!* In prosperity we pray

pray heavily and drowſily, but adverſity adds wings to our prayers, *Iſa.* 26. 16. The very Heathen Mariners cried aloud to God in a ſtorm. It is an ordinary ſaying, *Qui neſcit orare diſcat navigare.* There are no Sailors ſo wicked but they will pray when in a great ſtorm.

2 Upon *Preaching.* Proſperity glutteth the ſpiritual appetite, adverſity whetteth it.

3 Upon a *Sacrament.* How ſweet is a Sacrament to a true Saint after a long and great ſickneſs?

1 *It makes God and the word of God precious.* If God ſets our Cornfields on fire (as *Abſalom* did *Joabs*) then he ſhall be ſure to cauſe us to come running to him: And how ſweet is a Text of Scripture to a child of God in the hour of his diſtreſs?

By all this it appears, that God afflicts his children, not to *hurt them*, but to *help them*, and that God hath many glorious and gracious ends and aims in afflicting of them. Therefore it is that *David* ſaith of himſelf in *verſ.* 71 of this Pſalm,

It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy Statutes. He never ſaid, It is good for me that I have been in proſperity, but he rather ſaith the contrary in the 67th verſe, *Before I was afflicted, I went aſtray, but now I have kept thy Word. Gods people* will bleſs God as much (if not more) in *Heaven*, for their *adverſity*, than for their *proſperity*.

Uſe 1. Let us not paſs *raſh cenſures* upon *perſons* under great *afflictions*: Say not, ſuch a Woman is a greater ſinner than others, becauſe more afflicted. This was the fault of *Jobs* friends, and God expreſſeth his anger againſt them for it, *Job* 42. 7. *My wrath is kindled againſt thee, and thy two friends, for you have not ſpoken the thing that is right*, &c. This was the fault of the *Barbarians*, Acts 28. 4. *When they ſaw the venemous beaſt hang upon the hand of* Paul, *they ſaid among themſelves, no doubt this man is a murderer*, &c. But remember they were *Barbarians*. It is a ſign of a *Barbarian*, not of a *Chriſtian* to paſs a raſh cenſure upon perſons in afflic-

tion:

ction. *Think you* (ſaith Chriſt) *that thoſe eighteen upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell and ſlew them, that they were ſinners above all men that dwelt in Jeruſalem? I tell you, nay, but except you repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh*, Luke 13. 4, 5. Think you that they which have the Stone and Gout in extremity, that have Cancers in their faces and breaſts, are greater ſinners than others? I tell you nay, *&c.* For my part, if I would cenſure any, it ſhould be ſuch as live wickedly, and meet with no affliction; theſe have the *black brand* of reprobation upon them; Theſe are men deſigned to damnation. *Ambroſe* would not tarry a night in the houſe of a Gentleman that had never in all his life been afflicted, for fear (as he ſaid) leſt ſome great and ſudden Judgment ſhould betide it. But when I ſee a godly woman afflicted, then I ſay, this is not ſo much for her ſin, as for her trial: this is not to *hurt her*, but to *teach her* to know God, and to know her ſelf, to break her heart for ſin, and from ſin, to make the world bitter, and

Chriſt ſweet. God hath put her into the fire of affliction, to refine her, and make her a veſſel fit for his uſe. God is ſtriking her with the hammer of affliction, that ſhe may be ſquared, and made ready to be laid in the heavenly *Jeruſalem.*

Uſe 2. Here is *rich comfort to the children of God under the greateſt afflictions.* For the beſt of *Saints* are ſubject to the worſt afflictions: This is the lot of all Gods Children, Chriſt himſelf not excepted. *Afflictions* (indeed) conſidered in their own nature, are evil things, and ſo are called, *Amos* 5. 13. They are part of the curſe due to ſin, the fruit of Gods revenging wrath; they are as a biting and ſtinging Serpent; and to a wicked man, remaining wicked, they are the beginning of Hell; *Unſanctified afflictions parboil a wicked man for Hell and Damnation.* But now to a child of God, they have loſt both their name and nature, they are not *puniſhments* properly, but *chaſtiſements*, not τιμωρίαι, but παιδείαι; They are not *ſatisfactory*, but *caſtigatory.* Jeſus Chriſt hath taken away the *ſting of theſe*

theſe Serpents; they are not *fiery*, but Brazen Serpents, they have a *healing*, not a *hurting* power. Chriſt hath removed the curſe and bitterneſs of them. As the wood ſweetned the *waters of Marah*, *Exod.* 15.25. So Chriſts Croſs hath ſweetned the bitterneſs of afflictions.

There are eight comfortable conſiderations, to chear a heart of a child of God in the day of his diſtreſs.

1. God never afflicts his people, but out of *pure neceſſity*, 1 Pet. 2. 6. *Though now for a ſeaſon, if need be, ye are in heavineſs.* As a moſt loving *Father*, never corrects his child, but when he is forced to it: He willingly provides for his Child, but puniſheth him unwillingly. So God freely loadeth with his bleſſings, but he never chaſtiſeth his children, but when forced to it; therefore he ſaith expreſly, *Lam.* 3. 23. *He doth not afflict willingly.* Iſa. 27. 1. *Fury is not in me.* It is we that put Thunder-bolts in Gods hand. If the Sun did not firſt draw up the vapours from the earth, there would never be any Thunder-

ings.

ing or Lightning. God would never thunder from Heaven with his Judgments, if our ſins did not firſt cry to Heaven for puniſhment. As Chriſt whip'd the Sellers of Oxen and Sheep, out of the Temple, with a *whip made* (in all probability) of *their own Cords*; So God never ſcourgeth us, but it is with a whip made of our own ſins, *Prov.* 5. 22. *Rom.* 2. 5. *Thou treaſureſt up to thy ſelf, &c.* God hath a *double treaſure*, a *treaſure of mercy*, and a *treaſure of wrath*; his *treaſure of mercy* is always full, but his *treaſure of wrath* is empty, till we fill it by our ſins: And therefore when God puniſheth his Children, he calls it a *ſtrange work*, and a *ſtrange act*, Iſa. 28. 21. It is obſerved of the Bee, that it nevr ſtings but when provoked: Sure I am, that God never afflicts his Children, but out of pure neceſſity.

1 Not only out of *pure neceſſity*, but out of true and real love; as I have ſhewed, *Heb.* 12. 6, 7, 8.

Object. *Do not divine afflictions proceed out of anger? Was not God angry with* Moſes *for ſpeaking unadviſedly with*

with his lips? And angry with David *for his Adultery, and thereupon afflicted both of them?*

Answ. This anger was a fatherly anger rooted in love; It was not *ira quæ reprobat*, but *ira quæ purgat*. It was not *ira hostilis & exterminativa*, but *ira paterna & medicinalis*. As it is a great punishment for God sometimes not to punish, *Isa.*1.5. *Hos.*4. 14. So it is a great mercy, sometimes for God to with-draw his mercy.

3 Afflictions are a part of *Divine Predestination*. That God which hath *elected* us to *salvation*, hath also *elected us unto afflictions*, 1 Thes. 1. 2. *That no man should be moved by these afflictions; for you your selves know that we are appointed thereunto*. The same love with which God elects us, and bestoweth Christ, and his Spirit upon us, with the very same love he afflicts us.

4 They are part of the *gracious Covenant* which God hath made with his people, *Psal.*89.31,32,33. In which words we have three things considerable.

1 A supposition of sin; *If his children*

children forſake my Law, &c. For ſin is always *cauſa ſine qua non*, the cauſe without which God will never chaſtiſe us, and for the moſt part it is the cauſe for which he doth chaſtiſe us.

2. We have a gracious promiſe, *Then I will viſit their tranſgreſſion with the Rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes.*

3 We have a merciful qualification: *Neverthelеſs my loving kindneſs will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail, my Covenant will I not break*, &c. Afflictions are not only *mercies*, but *Covenant-mercies*; therefore *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 119.75 —— *And that thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me.* God would be *unfaithful*, if he did not afflict his children.

5 Conſider that afflictions are part of the *Saints bleſſedneſs*, Job 5. 17. *Behold! happy is the man whom God correcteth*, &c. *Behold* (ſaith *Eliphaz*) and we had need behold, and conſider it, for there are few that believe it, and yet it is moſt true; That afflictions (when ſanctified) when they are not only

corre-

corrections but *instructions*, then they are evidences that we are in a blessed condition. *Eliphaz* his saying must be interpreted by what *David* saith, *Psal.* 94 12. *Blessed is the man whom thou chastnest, O Lord, and teachest out of thy Law*: It is not *correction* simply, but *correction* joined with *instruction*, which intitles us to happiness. *Job even while he was upon the dunghill, wonders that God should set his heart so much upon him, as to visit him every morning, and to try him every moment*, Job 7. 17, 18. *Job* upon the Dunghill was happier than *Adam* in Paradise: *Adam* in Paradise was conquered by the Devil; but *Job* upon the Dunghill overcame the Devil. *Lazarus* in his Rags, was happier than *Dives* in his Robes; *Philpot* in his Cole-house, than *Bonner* in his Palace; and godly Mr. *Whitaker* upon his bed of pain, than a wicked man upon his bed of Down. There were many in Christs time, who would never have known him, or come to him, had it not been for their bodily diseases.

6. Consider the *gracious and merciful*

ciful ends, aims, and disigns, that God hath in afflicting his people what these are, ye have heard already.

7 The *sweet and precious Promises*, which he hath made to his children in the day of their adversity, to comfort them, and support them; what these are, you shall hear afterwards.

8. Consider, that all *afflictions* shall work at last for the good of *Gods Children*, Romans 8. 28. Though they are not *bonæ*, yet they shall be *in bonum*; though they are not good in themselves, yet they shall turn to their good. God beats his children as we do our clothes *in the Sun*, only to beat out the *Moths*; God puts them into the fiery Furnace, not to hurt them, but only to *untie the bonds of their sins*; as he dealt with the three Children, *Daniel* 3. 25. God will either deliver them out of their *afflictions*, or send them to Heaven by them; Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Use 3. If the best of Saints are subject

ſubject in this life unto many great and tedious *afflictions*, then let us

1 *Expect*
2 *Prepare* for } *Afflictions:*
3 *Improve*

1 Let us *expect afflictions*; for Chriſt hath ſaid expreſly, *Joh.* 16.33. *In the world ye ſhall have tribulation.* There is in every child of God,

1 *Sufficiens Fundamentum, a ſufficient foundation* for God to build *a houſe of Correction* upon: There is ſin enough to deſerve affliction.

2 There is *Sufficiens Motivum, Motives ſufficient* to prevail with God to chaſtiſe them when they ſin againſt him; ſome of theſe you have heard already, let me add one more: Becauſe he is more diſhonoured by the ſins of his own Children, than by the ſins of wicked men: As it is a greater diſcredit to an *Earthly Father*, when his own Children, than when other mens children, live wickedly; ſo it is a *greater diſparagement* to our *heavenly Father* when his own Sons and Daughters, than when the Devils Children

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Children transgress his Law: And therefore God will chastise them *sooner, surer,* and *more* than others. 1 *Sooner*, Romans 2. 9. *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first and also of the Gentile.* First, the Jew, and then the Gentile. 2 *Surer* than others. *Amos* 3. 2. *You only have I known of all the Families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.* 3 *More* than others, *Lam.* 4. 6. *The punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people, is greater than the punishment of the sin of* Sodom, *&c.* Dan. 9 12. *Under the whole Heaven hath not been done, as hath been done upon* Jerusalem.

3 There is *sufficiens necessitas, sufficient necessity* to provoke God to afflict them. It is needful that the Wheat be winnowed, that so the chaff may be separated from it. It is needful that the wind blow upon the wheat, to cleanse it, and that Gold be put into the Furnace, to purge and purifie it. When the *Sheep of Christ* are divided one from the other in Judgment, and affections, when separated in *Doctrine*, *Wor-*

Worſhip and *Diſcipline*; it is very needful that God ſhould ſend afflictions and diſtreſſes, which may be (as the *Shepherds Dog*) very ſerviceable and inſtrumental, to unite them together, and to gather them into one *Sheep-fold*. And therefore let the Saints of God expect afflictions.

Gods people are to prepare for afflictions.

2 Let us *prepare and provide againſt the day of tribulation*. Let us provide,

1 A ſtock of graces.

1 *A ſtock of Graces*. For ſickneſs is a time to ſpend grace, but not to get grace. A Chriſtian in ſickneſs without grace, is like a Soldier in War without Armour, like a houſe in ſtormy weather without a foundation, and like the men of the old world, when ready to be drowned, without an Ark. Wo be to that perſon that hath his graces to get when he ſhould uſe them! And therefore if we would be comforted in the day of tribulation, we muſt provide afore-hand a furniture of graces.

1 *A true Faith* (for a *painted Faith* will avail no more than a *painted Helmet*, or a *painted Ship*) and not only a *True*, but alſo a *ſtrong Faith*.

A

A little faith will faint under great afflictions; when the winds began to blow fiercely, *Peters* little Faith began to fail, *Mat.*14.30.

2 *A great measure of patience* to inable us to wait quietly and contentedly, till God come in with help, for many times he tarrieth till the fourth watch of the night, as he did, *Matth.* 14. 25. And therefore we have need of patience to keep us from murmuring or repining.

3 *A great stock of self-denial, humility, repentance, contempt of the world, and heavenly-mindedness.* He that is furnished with grace in an evil hour, will be as safe and secure, as *Noah* was in the Ark, in the time of the deluge; or as those were, who had sufficiency of Corn in the time of the seven years Dearth in *Ægypt.*

2 stock of Assurance.

2 *A stock of assurance of Salvation:* For though a man hath never so much grace, yet if he wants the assurance of it, he cannot receive any comfort by it in the day of his distress. *Jacob* was not at all quieted in his spirit, for *Joseph*'s being alive, till he came to know of it. And therefore

fore we muſt not only provide *grace*, but the aſſurance of *grace*, that we may be able to ſay with confidence, as *Job* did upon the Dunghill, *Job* 19. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth*; and with the holy Apoſtle, *Romans* 8. 38. *I am perſwaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* That man who hath got a Scripture aſſurance of his Salvation, will be more than a Conqueror in the day of his diſtreſs.

3 *A ſtock of divine Experiences.* Happy is that man, that lodgeth up in his heart all the former Experiences he hath had of Gods love and mercy towards him, and knoweth how to argue from them in the day of calamity: Thus did *Moſes* in his prayer to God, *Numbers* 14. 19. *Pardon, I beſeech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatneſs of thy mercy, and as thou haſt forgiven this people from Ægypt, even until now.* Becauſe God

3 A ſtock of Divine Experiences.

God had forgiven them, therefore *Moſes* entreats him to forgive them; this Argument is drawn from former experience. And thus *David* encourageth himſelf, 1 *Sam.* 17.37. *The Lord hath delivered me out of the paw of the Lion, and out of the paw of the Bear, and he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philiſtine.* Thus alſo *Paul* reaſoneth, 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Who delivered us from ſo great a death, and doth deliver, and in whom we truſt that he will yet deliver us.* Divine experiences are the Saints great encouragements in the day of Affliction. Bleſſed is the man that hath his quiver full of theſe Arrows.

4 A ſtock of Sermons.

4. *A ſtock of Sermons.* We muſt do with Sermons as the Tradeſmen do with the money they get; ſome of it they lay out for their preſent uſe, and ſome of it they lay up againſt the time of ſickneſs. That man is an ill husband, and an unthrifty Tradeſman that makes no proviſion for old age, or for an evil day; and that man is an unprofitable hearer of the word who doth not ſtock and ſtore himſelf with Sermons, whereby he may be comforted

forted in the hour of affliction. And therefore the Prophet *Isaiah* adviseth us, *Isa.* 42. 23. *To hear for the time to come*, or (as it is in the Hebrew) *for the after-time.* Sermons are not only to be heard for our present use, but to be laid up for after-times, that when we lie upon our sick-beds, and cannot hear Sermons, we may then live upon the Sermons we have heard.

5 And lastly, we must prepare and provide a stock of *Scripture-Promises*, which will be as so many reviving Cordials to chear us, and as so many *Spiritual Anchors*, to uphold us from perishing in the day of our tribulation. What these Promises are, you shall hear afterwards: These upheld *David* in the hour of his distress, and therefore he saith in the Text, *Unless thy Law had been my delight, I had perished in mine affliction.* If this our *dear Sister* had not had this stock, she had been quite *overwhelmed* under the grievousness of her tormenting pains. Be wise therefore, *O ye Saints of God*, and prepare these five provisions in the time of health, that so

5 A stock of Scripture Promises.

ſo ye may live joyfully in the time of ſickneſs.

3 Gods people are to improve afflictions.

3 As we muſt expect and provide for afflictions, ſo alſo we muſt labour (when afflicted) *to improve them for our Spiritual benefit and advantage.* We muſt pray more for the ſanctification of them, than for their removal: It was not the *ſtaffe* of *Eliſha* that revived the dead Child, but *Eliſha* himſelf. It was not the *troubling* of the *waters* of the Pool of *Bethesda*, that made them healing, but the coming down of the *Angel.* It was not the *Clay and Spittle* that cured the blind eyes, but *Chriſts anointing* them with it. It was not the Cloak of *Elijah* that divided the waters, but the God of *Elijah*: Troubles, ſtroaks, blows, afflictions, and diſtreſſes will do us no good, unleſs the Lord be pleaſed to make them effectual: And therefore let us pray unto God, that he would give us grace together with our afflictions; That he would add *inſtruction* to his *correction*; That he would make us *good Scholars* in the *School of Afflictions*, and inable us to take out all thoſe excellent

leſſons

leſſons, which he would have us to learn in it, that thereby we may come to know God *more powerfully, and experimentally, and to know our ſelves, and our own frailty, and our abſolute dependance upon God more effectually*; that thereby we may be more *purified* and *refined*, that the *wind* of *temptation* may cleanſe us from the *chaff* of our *corruption*; that we may *learn Righteouſneſs* by Gods *Judgments*, and be made partakers of his *holineſs*. Such a good Scholar was *Manaſſeh*, he got more good by his *Iron chain*, than by his *Golden chain*. Such another was the *Prodigal Child*, who was happier amongſt the *Swine*, than when in his *Fathers houſe*. Such was *Paul*, his being *ſtrucken* down to the ground, raiſed him up to Heaven; by the blindneſs of his body, his ſoul received ſight; and he was turned from a perſecuting *Saul*, to a perſecuted *Paul*. Such another was *David*, who profeſſeth of himſelf, *That it was good for him that he was afflicted*; and ſuch Scholars ought we to be:

There are ſome that are *arrant*

Dunces in this School, that are like unto the *Buſh* which *Moſes* ſaw, which burned with fire, but was not conſumed; the fire did not conſume the *Thorny* Buſh. Many ſuch *Thorny* Sinners are burnt up with the fire of Divine Afflictions, but their ſins are not conſumed. Of theſe the Prophets complain, *Amos* 4. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *Yet they have not returned, &c.* Jer. 5. 3. *Thou haſt ſtricken them, but they have not grieved; thou haſt conſumed them, but they have refuſed to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a Rock, they have refuſed to return.* Rocks and ſtones by hewing and poliſhing may be made fit for a building: but there are ſome men who by no afflictions will be amended. *The mountains melt at the preſence of the Lord, and the Rocks rend aſunder when he is angry:* But there are ſome that have made their *faces* harder than the *Rocks* and the *Mountains*, and are not at all affected with Gods anger. Of ſuch as theſe *Bernard* complains, *Multi humilitati, pauci humiles, corripimur, ſed non corrigimur, plectimur, ſed non flectimur;*

Multo

Multo facilius fregeris quam flexeris. Non ceſſant vitia civium uſque ad excidia civitatum; Prius eſt interire quam corrigi. Prius ipſos, quam in ipſis vitia non eſſe.

There are others that are the *worſe for their afflictions*, like the *Smiths Anvil*, the more they are ſtricken, the harder they are: Such a one was King *Abaz*, 2 *Chron.* 28. 22. *In the time of his diſtreſs he did treſpaſs yet more againſt the Lord:* There is a brand put upon him,---This is that King *Abaz*, that wicked King *Abaz*, that Reprobate King *Abaz*. As Pearls put in Vinegar loſe their colour and beauty; ſo many, when under Gods hand, loſe all their glory and excellency, and begin to diſtruſt Gods Providence to call his juſtice into queſtion, to murmur and repine againſt Gods dealings, and to uſe unlawful means for their deliverance. Of theſe the Prophet *Iſaiah* complains, *Iſa.* 1. 5. *Why ſhould you be ſtricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more:* Such was *Ahaziah*, 2 Kings 1. 2. that ſought for help from *Baalzebub the God of Ekron*; and ſuch

was *Saul*, who ſought to the Witch of *Endor* for health in the day of his diſtreſs.

Both of theſe ſorts are in a ſad and miſerable condition: For God hath two Furnaces, the *Furnace of affliction*, and the *Furnace of Hell-fire*. If the firſt Furnace will not purge us, the ſecond will everlaſtingly conſume us. As the *Roman Conſuls* had a man appointed to go before them, carrying a *Rod* and an *Axe*; a *Rod* for the puniſhing of *corrigible Offenders*, an *Axe* for the deſtruction of *incorrigible*; So God hath his *Rod*, and his *Axe*, his *Pruning-Knife*, and his *Chopping-Knife*, his *Warning-pieces*, and his *Murdering-pieces*. Afflictions are his *Rods* to correct us for our ſin, his *Pruning-Knife* to pare off our luxuriant branches; his *Warning-Pieces* to call upon us to repent.

But if his *Warning-Pieces* will do us no good, we muſt expect his *Murdering-Pieces*. If his *Pruning-Knife* will not amend us, his *Chopping-Knife* will confound us. If his *Rods* will not reclaim us, then his *Axe* will hew us down, and caſt us into everlaſting

ing fire. God hath *three houſes*, the *houſe of Inſtruction*, of *Correction*, *and of Deſtruction*, The place where Gods people meet to hear his Word, is his *houſe of Inſtruction*; and if we profit in this houſe, he will never carry us unto the *houſe of Correction*; But if we be ſtubborn and rebellious in the *houſe of Inſtruction*, then he will ſend us to the *houſe of Correction*; and if we profit in this houſe, he will never ſend us into the *houſe of Deſtruction*: But if we continue incorrigible in the *houſe of Correction*, he will inevitably ſend us to the *houſe of Deſtruction*, that is, unto Hell-fire.

And therefore, whenſoever God brings us into the School of affliction, let us labour to be good Scholars in it, and to anſwer all thoſe ends, aims, and deſigns which God hath in afflicting of us. Let us pray to God that our afflictions may be divine Hammers to break our hearts for ſin, and from ſin; may make the *world bitter*, and *Chriſt more precious*; may *prove* and *improve* our graces, and may put an *edg* upon all holy duties.

There are two things I would have you in an eſpecial manner to labour after:

1 *Labour when afflicted, to know the meaning of Gods Rod.*

2 *That the good you get by afflictions may abide upon you after your recovery from them.*

Godspeople are to labour to know the meaning of Gods Rod.

1 You muſt labour to know the meaning of Gods Rod, and what the particular arrant is which he hath to you in the day of your diſtreſſes; you muſt do as *David* did, 2 *Sam.* 21. 1. He enquired of the Lord, *to know the reaſon why he ſent a Famine amongſt them.* So muſt you, you muſt pray as *Job* doth, *Job* 10. 2. *Shew me, O Lord, wherefore thou contendeſt with me?* When the cauſe of a diſeaſe is found out, it is half cured. Your great care therefore muſt be to ſtudy to know the particular cauſe and reaſon, why God turns your proſperity into adverſity. The Prophet *Micah* tells us, *Micah* 6. 9 That *the Rod hath a voice*, and that the *man of wiſdom ſhall ſee Gods Name upon it.* There is a great meaſure of Spiritual Art and Wiſdom required to enable a man to hear

hear this voice, and to understand the language of it. A spiritual Fool cannot do it.

Quest. *What must we do, that we may understand the voice of the Rod?*

How we may know the meaning of Gods Rod.

Ans. You must know that the Rod of God ordinarily speaks *three languages*; it is sent for *correction for sin*, for the *trial* and *exercise of grace*, and for *instruction in holiness*: Sometimes indeed it is sent only for *trial* and *instruction*, and not at all for sin. Upon this account was *Job* afflicted, and the blind man, *Joh.* 9.3. But for the most part it hath a *three-fold voice*: it is appointed for *instruction*, *probation*, and also for *Correction*, Lam. 3:39. Isa. 42. 24. Luk. 1. 20. 1 Cor. 11. 30.

Quest. *How shall a man know whether his afflictions be only for* trial and instruction, *and not at all for sin?*

Answ. The safest and best way for a Christian in this case, is to believe that all his afflictions are both for *trial* and *instruction*, and also for sin: Indeed when he seeth another man, who is very Godly, grievously diseased, he may charitably

tably believe, that this is for his trial, and not for his ſin; but when it is his own caſe, then (as Dr. *Ames* ſaith moſt excellently), *Æquiſſimum, tuiſſimum, & Deo gratiſſimum eſt, ut in afflictionibus omnibus peccata noſtra intueamur, quæ illas vel directe procurarunt, vel ſaltem promeruerunt. Quamvis enim omnes afflictiones non immittantur ſemper directe & perpetue propter peccatum, peccatum tamen eſt omnium afflictionum fons & fundamentum*, Rom. 5.12.---- "It is moſt equal, moſt ſafe, and "moſt acceptable to God, to have "an eye upon our ſins, which have "either directly procured them, or "at leaſt deſerved them. For though "afflictions are not always ſent di-"rectly and eſpecially for ſin, yet "ſin is the Original and Foundation "of all afflictions.

How to find out the particular ſin for which God afflicts us.

Queſt. *What courſe muſt we take to find out what that* ſin *is in* particular, *for which God corrects us?*

Anſw. 1. Sometimes we may read our ſin in our puniſhment. *Adonibezek*, though a heathen King, did this, Judg. 1.7. *Threeſcore and ten Kings, having their Thumbs and their*

their

their great Toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table; as I have done, ſo God hath requited me. I read of holy *Ephraim*, that he was converted by the ſuitableneſs of his affliction unto the ſin he had committed, for he ſaw clearly that his miſery came not by chance, but from God immediately, and for ſin. As a man may ſometime gather the diſeaſe of the Patient, by obſerving the Phyſitians Bill; ſo he may gueſs at his ſin, by conſidering his puniſhment.

2 Conſider what *that ſin* is for which thy Conſcience doth moſt of all accuſe thee. Conſcience is Gods Vicegerent, his boſom-Preacher. And when we ſleight the voice of Conſcience, God ſeconds it with the voice of his Rod, which ſpeaks the very ſame language that Conſcience doth.

3 Conſider what is the ſin of thy *Complexion*, and *Conſtitution*, what is thy *Dilectum delictum*, thy *peccatum in deliciis*, thy beloved ſin; what is that ſin to which thou art moſt of all inclined; and if that ſin prevail over thee, and thou canſt

not ſay with *David*, Pſal. 18. 23. *I have kept my ſelf from mine iniquity*; It is very probable that for the ſubduing of that ſin, thou art corrected of God.

4 If ever thou haſt been at the gates of death, deſpairing of life, conſider what that ſin was, which did then moſt of all trouble and perplex thy Conſcience; or if ever thou haſt been in a Dream, ſuppoſing thy ſelf to be dying, and breathing out thy laſt; what was that ſin which did then moſt of all affright thee: It is very likely that God by afflicting thee, intends to get that ſin more conquered and mortified.

5 Conſider what thoſe ſins are for which thy *godly Miniſter* (under whoſe care thou liveſt) doth reprove thee, and of which thy *true* and *real friends* do accuſe thee; for, if thou haſt ſleighted the voice of thy faithful Miniſter, and friends, ſurely *God* out of his love to thee, followeth their advice with the voice of his Rod, that thereby he may open thine ear to Diſcipline, and command thee to depart from thoſe iniquities.

But

But if thou canſt not find out that *particular ſin*, for which God afflicts thee, labour to repent of every ſin, and then thou wilt be ſure to repent of that ſin. If thou canſt not find out the *Bee* that ſtings thee, pull down the whole *Hive*, or the *Thorn* that pricks thee, pull down the whole *Hedge*. Do that out of wiſdom, which *Herod* did out of malice, who becauſe he could not find out the *Babe Jeſus*, *killed all the Children in* Bethelem, *from two years old, and under, that ſo he might be ſure to kill Jeſus*. Let us ſeek the utter ruin and death of all our ſins, and then we ſhall be ſure to deſtroy that ſin for which God afflicts us; and when the cauſe is removed, the diſeaſe will forthwith be cured, and the Almighty pacified, and reconciled unto us.

4 Let us *labour that the good we reap by our afflictions, may abide upon us after our recovery from them*: There are very many who while they are under the Rod, ſeem to be very penitent, and do purpoſe and promiſe to amend their lives, but as ſoon as the Rod is removed, they return

The good we get by our afflictions muſt remain with us after our recovery.

return like the Dog to the Vomit, &c. Such was *Pharaoh*, whilſt he was plagued he confeſſed his ſin, and prayed for pardon; but as ſoon as ever the Judgment was gone, he hardned his heart. Such were the *Iſraelites*, Pſal. 78. 34, 35, 36, 37. *They were not ſtedfaſt, they turned back.* Juſt like a truantly School-boy, who while his Maſter is whipping him, will promiſe any thing, but when it is done, forgets preſently to do what he promiſed: Or like unto *water*, which while it is upon the fire is *very hot*, but as ſoon as ever it is taken off the fire, preſently groweth cold. I knew a man who in the time of his ſickneſs was ſo terrified in his Conſcience for his ſins, that he made the very Bed to ſhake, upon which he lay, and cryed out all night long, *I am damned, I am damned*, and made many and great Proteſtations of amendment of life, if God would be pleaſed to recover him: In a little while he did recover; and being recovered, was as bad, and as wicked as ever before.

And therefore let us labour that the

the good we get by our afflictions, may not vaniſh away with our afflictions, but may abide on us after we are recovered, that we may be able to ſay with *David*, *It is good for me that I was afflicted*; not only that *I am*, but *that I was*; *David* praiſeth God in health for the good he had got in ſickneſs, and which ſtill abode with him. Let us ſay with the ſame Prophet, *Pſal.*66.13,14. *I will go into thy Houſe with burnt-Offerings, I will pay thee my Vows which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath ſpoken, when I was in trouble.* Let us pray unto God that his afflictions may not only skin over our ſpiritual diſeaſes, and coup up our ſins, but mortifie them, and ſo change our natures, that we may never return to folly.

I will conclude this point with a famous ſaying of *Plinius ſecundus*, worthy to be written in Letters of Gold: A friend writes to him, and intreats him to give him advice how to frame his life, ſo as he might live as becomes a good man: He returns him this anſwer; I will not preſcribe many Rules, there is this

this one only which I commend to thee above all other. *Ut tales eſſe perſeverimus ſani, quales nos futuros profitemur infirmi. Let us labour to continue and perſevere to be ſuch, when we are well, as we purpoſe and promiſe to our ſelves to be, when we are ſick.* There is hardly any man ſo wicked, but he will in ſickneſs make many and great Promiſes of a new life, and of univerſal reformation, if God would reſtore him. Now then, if we not only be ſuch, but continue to be ſuch when reſtored, as we promiſe to be when ſick, then we ſhall be excellent *Scholars* in the School of affliction, and God will either (as I have already ſaid) deliver us out of affliction, or ſend us to Heaven by affliction: So much for the firſt truth ſuppoſed.

The end of the firſt Sermon.

THE

THE WORD of GOD IS THE Saints Delight.

SERMON II.

Pſal. 119. 92:

Unleſs thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine affliction.

NOw I come to ſpeak of the ſecond Truth ſuppoſed in the Text.

That the Word of God is the Saints darling, and delights; Not only their *delight*, but in the plural number, their *delights*; that is, (as our *Annotations* ſay) a Saint doth greatly delight in Gods Law; or as *Junius*, All the delight of a Saint is in Gods Law; Gods Word is the center of his delights, *Niſi lex*

lex tua erat omnis oblectatio mea; Many were the troubles and ſorrows of *Davids* life, but againſt them all he found as many comforts and delectations in Gods Word; therefore he ſaith, verſ. 29. *Thy Teſtimonies are my delights*, &c. and 143. *Trouble and anguiſh have taken hold on me, yet thy Commandments are my delights:* And in the Text, *Unleſs thy Law had been my delights*, &c. Whilſt others delight in vanity and iniquity, whilſt others take pleaſure in Hunting, Hawking, Carding, Dicing, Eating, and Drinking, the Saints of God can ſay with *Auſtin*, *Sacræ Scripturæ tuæ ſunt ſanctæ deliciæ meæ*, *Thy Holy Scriptures are my holy delights.*

Queſt. *Why do the Saints of God take ſuch delight in the Law of God?*

Reaſons why the Saints take ſo much delight in Gods Law.

Anſw. 1. Becauſe they are ſpiritually inlightned; their eyes are opened to behold the glory and beauty, and to underſtand the deep myſteries of the Law; therefore *David* prayeth, *verſ.* 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.* As the Apoſtle ſaith of the *Jews*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 14, 15, 18.

That

That to this day there is a vail over their hearts when Moſes *is read; and when they ſhall turn to the Lord, this vail ſhall be removed:* So it is with Chriſtians; when a wicked man reads the Word, there is a vail over his eyes, and over his heart, and over the Scriptures, *The God of this world hath ſo blinded his eyes*, that he cannot behold the beauty and glory of them; but the true Saint hath this vail removed: Chriſt hath anointed his eyes with *Spiritual Eye-ſalve*; he ſeeth a ſurpaſſing excellency in the Word of God, and therefore cannot but delight in it.

2 Becauſe they are not only *enlightned*, but *regenerated*; And as Children new born by the inſtinct of nature, have a natural appetite to milk for conſervation of their life; ſo the new born Saint, by the inſtinct of grace, hath a ſpiritual appetite to the Word of God; according to that of Saint *Peter*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. *As new born Babes deſire the ſincere Milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby.* The word of God is the Saints food, and as it is impoſſible for

for a Child unborn to desire food, so for a man unregenerated to hunger after, and take true pleasure in the Word; and as it is impossible for a new-born child, not to delight in Milk, so it is as impossible for a regenerate Christian, not to delight in the Law of God.

3 Because a true Saint hath the Law of God *written in his heart*, according to that precious Promise of the Covenant of Grace, *Jer.* 31.33. *I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.* A Saints heart is the counterpain to Gods Law. The Law is within his heart, *Psal.* 40.8. and as it is in the *Hebrew*, in the midst of his bowels, *medio viscerum*. God hath infused a principle of Grace into his inward parts, whereby he is not only inclined, but inabled to walk in all the Commandements of the Law, blameless. A true Saint hides the Law in his heart, as a *choice Jewel* in a most precious Cabinet, as *David* saith Ver. 9. *I have hid thy law in my heart*; Hid it as a rare Treasure. So doth every Saint, and therefore cannot but delight in it.

4 Be-

4 Becauſe the ſame *holy Spirit* that wrote the word, *dwelleth in every true Saint.* It is certain that all Scripture is of *Divine inſpiration*, and that the *holy men of God ſpake as they were guided by the Holy Ghoſt.* And it is as certain, That the ſame Holy Ghoſt dwelleth in every Saint, *Rom.* 8. 11. And by vertue of the in-dwelling of the Spirit, they are ſweetly and powerfully drawn to make the Law of God their chiefeſt delight.

5 Becauſe it is *Gods Inditement, and Invention.* This reaſon is brought in the Text, *Unleſs thy Law*, &c. It is the Law of that God in whom they delight. It tranſcribes the mind and heart of God. A true Saint ſeeth the *Name*, *Authority*, *Power*, *Wiſdom*, and *Goodneſs* of God in every letter of it, and therefore cannot but take pleaſure in it. It is an Epiſtle ſent down to him from the God of Heaven. It is one of the greateſt *Love-tokens* that ever God gave to his Church. There are two great Gifts that *God* hath given to his people. The *Word Chriſt*, and the *Word of Chriſt:* Both are unſpeakably

ably great; but the firſt will do us no good without the ſecond.

6 A true Saint cannot but delight in the word of God, becauſe it is his *inheritance*, verſ. 111. *Thy Teſtimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever, for they are the rejoycing of my heart.* Therefore they were the rejoycing of his heart, becauſe they were his everlaſting Inheritance.

7 Becauſe he finds a *ſweetneſs in it*. Delight is nothing elſe but a paſſion of the ſoul, ariſing from the ſweetneſs of the object that we enjoy. Things that are good, pleaſant, ſuitable and ſweet, are the object of our delights; ſuch is the Word of God to every true Saint; it is *ſweeter than the honey and the honey-comb*, Pſal. 19. 10. So alſo *Pſal.* 119. 103. *How ſweet are thy words unto my taſte, yea, ſweeter than honey to my mouth.* A Saint muſt needs delight in it, it is ſo ſuitable, and ſo ſweet.

8 Becauſe he *loves the Law*. Now that which we love, we cannot but delight in, when we come to enjoy it. A true Saint doth not only love the Law, but he loves it exceeding-

ceedingly, *Pſal.*119.167. *My ſoul hath kept thy Teſtimonies, and I love them exceedingly.* A true Saint can ſay with *David*, Pſal. 119.97. *O how do I love thy Law!* And verſ. 127: *I love thy Commandments above Gold, yea, above fine Gold:* And verſ. 72. *The Law of thy mouth is better to me than thouſands of gold and ſilver.* Now becauſe the Saints of God are ſo inamoured with the Law of God, therefore it is that they cannot but delight in it, as *David* ſaith, *Pſal.*119.47. *I will delight my ſelf in thy Commandments, which I have loved.* He that loves the Commandements (as all Saints do) cannot but delight in them.

Uſe. This ſhews that there are but few *true Saints* amongſt us. There are many *baſtard Saints*, and *nominal Saints*, but few true and real Saints. We live in an age wherein there were never more *Saints*, and never fewer, never more by outward *Profeſſion*, and never fewer by a holy *Converſation*. It is the property of a true Saint to make the Word of God his darling and delights.

But

But where ſhall we find ſuch Saints? It is eaſie to find out men that can ſay, *Eating and Drinking is my delight, Carding and Dicing is my delight, Reading of vain and trifling Books is my delight, to ſatisfie the luſts of the fleſh is my delight.* But where is the man that can truly ſay as *David* doth? *The Law of God is my delights, and the joy and rejoycing of my heart for ever.* *Auſtin* profeſſeth of himſelf, that before his *Converſion*, he took no pleaſure in the Word of God: His proud heart (as he ſaith) would not ſtoop to the humble expreſſions of it. After *his Converſion*, he was raviſhed with the beauty and excellency of the Scriptures; but before his Converſion, he ſaw no excellency in them. *Politian* (though a great Scholar, yet a notorious Atheiſt) profeſſeth moſt blaſphemouſly, that he never loſt more time, than in reading the Scripture. And it is reported of *Plato*, that when he had read the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*, he ſaid, *Hic vir multa dicit, ſed nihil probat*: This man ſaith many things, but proveth nothing. Where ſhall we find

find the man that puts a due eſtimation upon the Word of God? That prizeth it above *Gold, yea, above much fine Gold? That rejoyceth in thy word, as much as in all riches*, verſ. 14. That can appeal to God, and ſay as *David*, verſ. 159. *Conſider, O Lord, how I love thy Precepts?* and Verſ. 97. *Oh how do I love thy Law?* There are ſome men that can delight in any thing but in God and his Word, and his Ordinances: They can delight in the Creatures of God, but cannot delight in the Ordinances of God. They can delight in the Gifts of God, in Riches, and Health, and Honours: But they cannot delight in the God of theſe Gifts. They can delight in Books of Philoſophy and Humanity, but they cannot delight in the Word of God.

Mark the ſad condition that theſe are in.

It is a certain ſign that there is a vail over their eyes and hearts, that they are not yet anointed with Chriſts *eye-ſalve*, that the God of the world hath blinded their eyes, that they cannot ſee the glorious excel-

cellencies of the Law of God.

It is certain, that they are not *born anew*, for if they were new born Babes, they would desire the sincere Milk of the Word.

It is certain that the *Law of God* is not yet *written in their hearts*; and that the *Spirit of God* doth not dwell in them. It is certain, that they have no part nor portion in the Word of God, that they never tasted the sweetness that is in it, and that they have no true love to God, nor to his Word. It is a true saying, *Qui Regem amat, Legem amat*, he that loves a King, will love his Law. And I may say, *Qui Deum amat, Legem Dei amat*: He that loves God, will love the *Law of God*, which is nothing else but his Image, and his Picture, his last Will and Testament, his blessed Love-token: And therefore if you delight not in the *Law of God*, it is evident you do not delight in the God of this Law. And if you delight not in God, he will not delight in you; unless it be to *laugh at your destruction*, as it is *Prov.* 1. 26.

Quest. *But how shall I know whether*

ther I do delight in the Word of God, or no?

Anſ. You ſhall know it by theſe Notes.

1 He that delights in Gods Law, will be very frequent in *meditating* and *reading* of it, and very often in ſpeaking of it. Thus ſaith *David*, Pſal: 1: 2. *His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and therein he will meditate day and night.* And *Pſal.* 119. 97: *Oh how do I love thy Law! it is my meditation all the day.* So alſo, verſ. 15: 16, 23. He that takes pleaſure in the Law, he will be often thinking of it, as Chriſt ſaith, Mat. 6. 21. *Where the treaſure is, there the heart will be alſo.* If the Word of God be thy treaſure, thou wilt meditate on it, *Cogitatione crebrâ longâ & profundâ.* Thou wilt frequently think of it; and when thou beginneſt to think of it, thou wilt dwell upon the thought of it, as a Bee dwells (as it were) upon the flower, to ſuck out the ſweetneſs that is in it; and thou wilt think of it with deep and ſerious meditations and contemplations; thou wilt *dive* into the unſearchable

riches and treaſures that are in the Word. And as thou wilt meditate on it, ſo thou wilt be often, and unweariſome in reading and peruſing of it, and diſcourſing about it. A man that delights in hunting, is never weary of talking of hunting; and he that delights in the world, of ſpeaking about the world; and if you delight in Gods Word, you would be very frequent, and indefatigable in diſcourſing of it.

2 If you delight in the *Word of God*, you would delight in the *Miniſters*, and *Ambaſſadors* of the Word, lawfully commiſſionated by Chriſt: For the great work of the Miniſtry is to expound and apply the Word; and therefore if you diſ-reſpect the godly, learned, lawful Miniſtry of the Word, you take no *delight* in the Word.

3 They that delight in the Word, will be at any coſt to bring the Word to their Congregations, they will part with thouſands of gold and ſilver, rather than with the Word; *He that eſteems the Word above thouſands, will be willing to part with hundreds for the Words ſake:* He will account

account a famine of the Word more bitter than a famine of bread; by how much the ſoul is better than the body, by ſo much will he be more troubled for a ſoul-famine, than a bodily.

4 He that delights truly in the Law, will ſincerely labour to obey it, and be much grieved when it is diſobeyed.

1 He will ſincerely labour to obey it; he will make the Word of God the man of his Counſel, *verſ.* 25. *Thy Teſtimonies are my delight*; but how doth he prove that? in the following words, *and my Counſellors*: He will make the Word a *Lamp to his feet, and a light to his paths*, ver. 105. In all his undertakings, he will enquire what God would have him to do, and he will make Gods Word his Compaſs to ſail by, and pray with *David*, ver. 35. *Make me to go in the path of thy Commandments, for therein do I delight.*

2 He will be much grieved when others tranſgreſs the Law of God. Thus *David*, verſ. 53. *Horror hath taken hold upon me, becauſe of the*

wicked that forſake thy Law. And verſe 136. *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes becauſe they keep not thy Law.*

And therefore you that delight in ſin, you cannot be ſaid to delight in the Word; and you that are not pained and grieved when others ſin, you are not amongſt the number of thoſe that take pleaſure in Gods Law, or in whom God takes pleaſure.

Uſe 2. Let us make it appear that we are *Saints in deed, and in truth*, not only Saints in *Mans*, but in *Gods Kalender*, by following the example of holy *David*, ſet down in the Text. Let us make the Law of God our joyes, and our delights. Let me ſpeak to you in the words of the Apoſtle, *Col.* 3. 16. *Let the Word of God dwell richly in you*, &c. not only *with you*, but *in you*. And in the words of Chriſt, *John* 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures, for therein you hope to find eternal life.* The *Greek* word ſignifieth to ſearch, as men do under ground for treaſures, or to ſearch as men who dive under water for ſomething

that

that is at the bottom. Let us with *Job* 23. 12. *Eſteem the Word of God above our neceſſary food.* Let us *love it above gold, yea above fine Gold*; Let it be *dearer to us than thouſands of gold and ſilver, ſweeter than the honey and the honey-comb.*

You that are Gentlemen, remember what *Hierom* reports of *Nepotianus*, a young Gentleman of *Rome*, *Qui longa & aſſidua meditatione ſcripturarum, pectus ſuum fecerat bibliothecam Chriſti*, who by often and aſſiduous meditation of the Scriptures, made his breaſt the Library of Chriſt. Remember what is ſaid of King *Alphonſus*, that he read over the Bible fourteen times, together with ſuch Commentaries as thoſe times afforded.

You that are Scholars, remember *Cranmer* and *Ridley*; the former learnt the New Teſtament by heart in his journey to *Rome*, the later, in *Pembroke-Hall* Walks in *Cambridg.* Remember what is ſaid of *Thomas-a-Kempis*, that he found reſt no where, *niſi in angulo cum libello*, but in a corner with this Book in his hand. And what is ſaid of *Beza*,

that *when he was above fourſcore years old*, he could ſay perfectly by heart any *Greek* Chapter in *Pauls* Epiſtles.

You that are Women, conſider what *Hierom* ſaith of *Paula*, *Euſtochiam*, and other Ladies, who were ſingularly verſed in the Holy Scriptures.

Let all men conſider that hyperbolical ſpeech of *Luther*, *That he would not live in Paradiſe without the Word; and with it, he could live well enough in Hell.* This ſpeech of *Luthers*, muſt be underſtood, *Cum grano ſalis.*

Queſt. *May not a wicked man delight in the Word of God? is it not ſaid of Herod*, Mark 6. 20. *That he heard* John Baptiſt *gladly? and of the ſtony ground*, Luke 8. 13. *That it received the Word with joy? Is it not ſaid of the Iſraelites remaining wicked, that they* delighted to know Gods ways, and took delight in approaching to God? *Iſa.* 58. 2. *and of the Jews*, *Joh.* 5. 35. *That they were willing* for a ſeaſon to rejoyce in the Light, *held forth by the preaching of* John Baptiſt?

Anſw.

Anſw. There is a wide and vaſt difference between the joy and delight which a true Saint takes in Gods Word, and that which may be found in an hypocrite.

1 The delight of a godly man, is *orderly and ſeaſonable*; it is the conſequent of conviction and humiliation: For though Joy be the great work of the Spirit, yet it is not the firſt work. Firſt, The Spirit by the Word convinceth and humbleth, and then comforteth: therefore Chriſt ſaith, *Mat.*5.4. *Bleſſed are thoſe that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted*; and *David* ſaith, *Pſal.*126.5. *They that ſow in tears, ſhall reap in joy.* But the joy of an hypocrite is *unſeaſonable and diſorderly*; It is his firſt work. It is ſaid of the ſtony ground, that when *they heard the word, they received it immediately with gladneſs*, Mark 4.16. It is not ſaid, they received it firſt with ſorrow, and then with gladneſs. Here is mention of joy, without any antecedent humiliation. Nay the Text ſaith expreſly, Luke 8. 6. *It lacked moiſture*, and therefore it withered away. There are many

Profeſſors in our days, that skip from ſin to joy at firſt, that all in an inſtant are in the higheſt form of ſin, and in the higheſt form of comfort; that skip out of the lap of the Devil, into the lap of joy: Theſe are as the ſtony ground. Theſe are wanton Chriſtians; they ſow before they plow; they know not the bitterneſs of ſin, and therefore in time of temptation fall away.

2 The delight that a godly man takes in the Word, is a well-rooted delight. It is rooted in an *humble, good, and honeſt heart*; as is ſaid of the good ground, *Luke* 8.15. But the delight of an Hypocrite is *ſhallow and ſuperficial*; as his graces are ſleight and formal, ſo are his delights. Therefore it is ſaid of the ſeed that fell upon the ſtony ground, that it had *no root*, Luke 8. 13. and *Matth.* 13. 5. *It wanted depth of earth*, and therefore when the Sun aroſe it was ſcorched. The Apoſtle hints, *Heb.*6 4. *And have taſted the good Word of God.* The delight of a wicked man in the Word, is but a *taſting and ſipping*, no *ſoaking*; a floating aloft in the

the River of Chriſts blood, no diving down to the bottom. A man may taſte a thing, and not like it; taſte, and *like it*, and yet not come up to the price of it, as the *young man*, Matth. 19. 22. He was very deſirous to enjoy eternal life, but he would not part with his poſſeſſions for the obtaining of it. A Cook taſteth of the meat he dreſſeth, but they only that are invited eat of it.

Taſting doth not imply *habitual grace*. A man may taſte that which he never digeſteth, nor concocteth. The *Iſraelites* taſted of the firſt fruits of the Land of *Canaan*, And yet did not enter into *Canaan*. Such is the joy of the Hypocrite: It is *outward and ſuperficial*; but the delight of a true Saint, is *inward, ſolid, and ſubſtantial*. *Jeremiah* ſaith, that the Word of God was the *joy and rejoycing of his heart*, and that he did eat it, *Jer.* 15. 16. he did not only taſte it, but eat it. And *Paul* ſaith, *Rom.* 7. 22. *I delight in the Law of God after the inner man*: His delights had depth of earth,

they were well digeſted and concocted.

3 It is *ſuperlative and over-topping.* A godly man delighteth more in God and his Word, than in any worldly thing whatſoever; *Lord, lift thou up* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 4. 6, 7.) *the light of thy countenance upon us: thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart, more than in the time that their corn, and their wine increaſed.* So alſo, *Pſal.* 43. 4. *Unto God my exceeding joy.* Pſal. 137. 6. *If I prefer not* Jeruſalem *above my chief joy.* And *Pſal.* 119. 72, 127. The delight of a Saint in Gods Word, *over-toppeth* all his creature-delights and enjoyments, and for the joy he finds in it, *he will ſell all that he hath to purchaſe it*, Mat. 13. 44. But the joy of a wicked man is of an *inferior nature*, he rejoyceth more in Corn, Wine, and Oyl, *&c.* And when it comes into competition, he will leave his ſpiritual and heavenly, rather than loſe his creature and carnal pleaſures. Thus *Herod* rejoyced in the word that *John Baptiſt* preached, but he rejoyced more in his *Herodias*; and when it came to the trial, he choſe to behead

head *John Baptiſt*, rather than to part with *Herodias*.

The ſtony gronnd, when perſecution aroſe, parted with all its joy and faith, rather than it would loſe its eſtate, or life. As a godly man *rejoyceth in worldly things, as though he rejoyceth not*, 1 Cor. 7. 30. So a wicked man *rejoyceth in ſpiritual things, as though he rejoyced not*. In the Old Law thoſe Fowls that did both fly and ſwim, were unclean. A wicked man would many times *fly aloft in ſpiritual delights*, but he would alſo *bath himſelf*, and *ſwim* in carnal pleaſures; and his heart is more affected with worldly advancement, and bodily recreations, than with heavenly; and this is a ſign that he is an *unclean Chriſtian*; and that his delights in God, and his Word, are not right, becauſe they are not *over-topping and ſuperlative*.

4 It is *powerful and ſoul-ſtrengthning*, full of life, vigour, and activity; it will enable the ſoul to do and ſuffer any thing for God; it turns a *Priſon* into a *Paradiſe*, it

makes

makes *Martyrdom* to be as a *bed of Roſes*; it is *Armour of proof* to ſteel us, and make us fit to endure afflictions, both for God, and from God; Therefore *David* ſaith in the Text, *Unleſs thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine affliction.* His delight in the Law ſupported him from ſinking. It is like *Oyl* to the *Wheels*, like *Sails* to the *Ship*, and *Wings* to the *Bird*; but the delight that a wicked man hath in the Word, is a *powerleſs, dead, fruitleſs, and ſtrengthleſs* delight; it is as a *paper Helmet*, and a *painted Fire*; it will not ſupport him in the hour of adverſity. The perſons repreſented by the ſtony ground, fell away, notwithſtanding their joy, as ſoon as ever perſecution aroſe for the Goſpel: But the joy of a true Saint is *ſoul-ſupporting, and ſoul-upholding. The joy in the Lord is their ſtrength*, Nehem. 8.10.

5 The delight that a godly man hath in the Word, is *ſin-excluding*; it cannot conſiſt with a delight in any ſin; therefore *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 119.11. *Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.*

Sin

Sin is as a *wooden window*, to ſhut out the true joyes of the Spirit. But now a wicked man, though he may delight in the Word, yet he alſo delights in ſinning *againſt the Word*. Although *Herod* heard *John Baptiſt* gladly, yet he kept his *Herodias*; and though the *Iſraelites* delighted to *know Gods ways*, yet they did not *delight to walk in his ways*. They were as a *Nation* that did righteouſneſs; he doth not ſay, they were ſuch, but *quaſi gens, &c.* as a Nation that did righteouſneſs. And though they delighted *to approach to God*, yet they did not delight to *obey* that God before whom they approached; they took pleaſure in ſinning againſt God, as well as in ſerving of God. *Iſa.* 58. It was not a *ſin-excluding joy*, and therefore it was falſe and counterfeit.

6 It is *grace-encreaſing*. The more a Saint delights in the *Word of God*, the more careful he will be to obey the *Will of God*, and to grow and increaſe in the *grace of God*; therefore *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 119. 167. *My ſoul hath kept thy teſtimonies, for*

for I love them exceedingly. And *Pſal.* 40. 8. *I delight to do thy Will, O my God, yea thy Law is within my heart.* Becauſe the Law was written in his heart, therefore he delighted to do it. He that delights to keep Gods Law, God will give him more grace to keep it, according to that remarkable Text, Pſal. 119. 55, 56. *I have remembred thy Name, O Lord, and have kept thy Law; this I had, becauſe I have kept thy Precepts.* What had *David* for keeping Gods Precepts? He had power to keep his Law; that is to grow and increaſe in keeping of it. As the Prophet, *Hoſ.* 6. 3. ſpeaks of the knowledg of God; *Then ſhall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord*; that is, if we induſtriouſly labour to know God, we ſhall have this reward, to be made able to know him more. So may I ſay of the Grace of God; *He that delights to keep Gods Law, ſhall have this reward, to be enabled to keep it more perfectly.*

A true delight in Gods Word is *Grace increaſing.* Grace is the *Mother* of all true joy, *Iſa.* 32. 17. and joy is as the *Daughter*, and the Mother and Daugh-

Daughter live and die together. True ſpiritual delight ebbs and flows as grace ebbs and flows. As the wood is to the fire, oyl to the flame, the ſhadow to the body, ſo is joy to grace. *Quantum creſcis in gratia, tantum dilataris in fiducia.* But now a wicked man, though he may have a kind of delight in Gods Word, yet it is not a delight of the right kind; it doth not argue that he hath true grace in him.

An Hypocrite is *all joy* and *no grace:* A *Gyant* in joy, and not ſo much as a *Dwarf* in Grace; like a green bough tyed to a dead tree. He is in the *higheſt form* of joy, and not ſo much as in the *loweſt form* of grace.

7 The delight that a godly man hath in the Word, is not only a delight in *ſpiritual things*, but a *ſpiritual delight*, grounded upon ſpiritual aims and reaſons. But the delight of a wicked man, though it be in ſpiritual things, yet it is but a *natural delight*. As a godly man *ſpiritualizeth carnal things*; ſo an ungodly man *carnalizeth ſpiritual things.*

things: *Auſtin* before his converſion, rejoyced much to hear *Ambroſe* preach, but it was becauſe of his eloquence (as he ſaith) not upon a ſpiritual account. A wicked man may follow a Preacher, and delight in his preaching, becauſe of his elegant words, and Rhetorical expreſſions, becauſe *he is unto him as a very lovely ſong of one that hath a pleaſant voice*, &c: as it is *Ezek.* 33. 32. Or out of *novelty*, becauſe newly come (as the *Iſraelites* delighted in *Manna* at firſt, but afterwards loathed it) or becauſe he *loves his perſon*; or out of a deſire to obtain a form of knowledg in heavenly things. The Phariſees delighted to do many ſpiritual things out of *vain-glory*. *Jehu* delighted to do the will of God, but it was for his own ends. *Pauci quærent Jeſum, propter Jeſum*. *Stella* is of opinion, that the Devil perſwaded *Herod to hear* John Baptiſt *gladly*; *and to reverence him, and to do many thing*, that ſo he might hold him the faſter in his poſſeſſion. The Devil had him ſure by one ſin, and therefore he provoked him to do ſome good things, that ſo he

he might rock him aſleep in preſumption; and by his good things he might quiet his conſcience, and put a fair gloſs upon his inceſtuous practices: A man may rejoyce in ſpiritual things upon ſinful grounds and reaſons. But now a true *Saints delights* in the *word* upon a *ſpiritual account*, becauſe it is *Gods Word*, and God would have him *delight in it*; becauſe it is his *guide to glory*, the way by which he is ſanctified. It is both *concha & canalis*, A *Ciſtern* to contain the glorious *Myſteries of Salvation*, and a *Conduit* to convey God and grace into his ſoul.

In a word, he delights in it, becauſe it is holy and pure; he can ſay with *David*, Pſal. 119. 140. *Thy word is very pure, therefore thy ſervant loveth it.* This no wicked man can truly ſay.

8 The delight that a godly man takes in the Word, is without any *reſervation* or *diſtinction*. He delights in the *whole Word of God*, in the *commanding*, and *threatning* word, as well as in the *promiſing* word; he beholds God, and his *wiſdom*, and

good-

goodneſs in every verſe, and therefore he can ſay with *Hezekiah*, Iſa. 39. 8: *Good is the Word of the Lord.* He hath the *whole Law* written in his heart, and rejoyceth in every *tittle of it*. But a wicked man hath his *reſervations* and *diſtinctions*, he may delight in the *promiſing* word, but he undervalues the *commanding* word, and turneth a deaf ear to the *threatning* word. It is ſaid of the *Jews*, that *they rejoyced in the light of John Baptiſt*; but it is not ſaid, They *rejoyced in his heat*: He was a burning and a ſhining light; they rejoyced in his ſhining, but not in his burning. It is hardly poſſible for a wicked man remaining wicked, to rejoyce in the *burning zeal*, *holineſs*, and *ſtrictneſs* of a *John Baptiſt*. But a godly man delighteth both in the *light* and *heat* of the word.

9 It is an *abiding delight*, 2 Theſ. 2. 18. *Everlaſting conſolation*, John 16. 22. *Your joy no man taketh from you.* It is as a *fixed Star*. But the delight of a wicked man in the word, is as the *crackling of thorns* upon the fire, and as the Corn that grew on the

the ſtony ground, which quickly ſprung up, and as quickly withered, *Job* 27.8. Therefore it it ſaid of the Jews, *Joh.*5.3. They rejoyced in his light for a *ſeaſon*. In the *Greek* it is, πρὸς τὴν ὥραν, for an hour. A wicked mans delight in the Word, is but as a *Blazing-Star*, which is quickly extinguiſhed. He may rejoyce in the Word while he is hearing of it, but it quickly vaniſheth away. He is like to a man that comes into a pleaſant Garden, and is delighted with the ſmell of it while he is there: But a Child of God makes a *Poſie of theſe Flowers*, to refreſh him when he is out. He delights to read, and to keep the *Law of God continually, for ever and ever*, Pſal.119.45.

Let us (I beſeech you) labour, with all labour, for this *ſuperlative, well-rooted, powerful, ſpiritual, ſin-excluding, grace-increaſing*, and *abiding delight*, in the whole Word of God.

Queſt. *What muſt we do, that we may be inabled thus to make the Law of God our Delights?*

Anſ. 1. You muſt ſeriouſly ſtudy the

the *Excellency of Gods Word*; this made *David* prize it ſo much, and love it ſo much, *Pſal.* 19. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. The Word of God hath God for its Author, and therefore muſt needs be full of infinite Wiſdom and Eloquence, even the VViſdom and Eloquence of God. There is not a word in it, but breathes out God, and is breathed out by God. It is (as *Ireneus* ſaith) κανων τῆς πίστεως ἀκλινὴς, an invariable rule of Faith, an unerring and infallible guide to heaven. It contains glorious Revelations and Diſcoveries, no where elſe to be found. It hath a *manifeſting*, *convincing*, *ſoul-humbling*, *ſoul-directing*, *ſoul converting*, and *ſoul-comforting* power and efficacy in it, as appears by theſe Scriptures, *Heb.* 4. 12. 1 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25. 1 *Kings* 21. 29. *Pſalm* 119. 105. 2 *Cor.* 3. 16. *Pſalm* 119. 50. And therefore to delight in the Word, and the God that made it, is not only our Duty, *Pſam* 37. 4. but it is Recorded in Scripture as our Priviledg, and as the great Reward that God would beſtow upon thoſe that keep holy

holy the Sabbath-day, *Iſa.*58.13,14: *Then thou ſhalt delight thy ſelf in the Lord.* This ſhall be thy great Reward.

2 You muſt fixedly ponder the neceſſity of practiſing this duty: For if you delight in *Gods Law*, God will *delight* in you. If the Law be your beloved, you are Gods beloved; If you take no *pleaſure* in his Word, his ſoul will take no *pleaſure* in you.

3 You muſt pray for the grace of *Illumination.* Whenſoever you take the Bible in your hand to read in it, pray *Davids* prayer, *Pſalm* 119. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.* Philoſophers obſerve, that *Lumen eſt vehiculum influentiæ:* Light is the Chariot of Influence: as it begets the Flower in the Field, the Gold in the Mineral; ſo the Foundation of all Regeneration, is *Illumination.* Pray that God would open your eyes that you may underſtand the Scriptures, as he did to his Apoſtles, *Luke* 24. 45:

45. That he would take away the Vail that is upon your hearts.

4 Pray that he that made you Creatures, would make you new Creatures, that as *new born Babes*, you may deſire the ſincere Milk of the Word.

5 Pray that God would fulfill that excellent promiſe, *Jer.* 31.33: That he would put his *Law* in your *inward parts*, and write it in your hearts, and then you cannot but heartily delight in it.

6 Pray to God to give you the ſame Spirit that wrote the Word, to enable you to delight in it.

7 Pray for a *Spiritual palate*, that you may not only delight in *ſpiritual things*, but have a *ſpiritual delight in ſpiritual things*. It is ſaid of the Lioneſs, that when ſhe hath once taſted of the ſweetneſs of mans fleſh, ſhe is never ſatisfied till ſhe hath more of it. He that hath taſted of the good Word of God, and not only taſted, but eaten it, and digeſted it into good nouriſhment, he will not only delight in it, but he will delight in it above Gold, yea, above fine Gold,

Gold, and he will never be ſatisfied, till he be filled with the fulneſs of that God that made it.

The end of the ſecond Sermon.

THE

THE Excellency and Uſefulneſs OF THE WORD.

SERMON III.

Pſal. 119. 92.

Unleſs thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine affliction.

NOW I come to ſpeak of the Propoſition that is clearly held forth in the Text.

Doct. 3. *That the Word of God delighted, is the afflicted Saints Antidote againſt ruin and deſtruction. Unleſs thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould, &c.* The Word of God is the ſick Saints ſalve, the dying Saints Cordial, a moſt precious medicine

dicine to keep Gods people from periſhing in time of affliction: This upheld *Jacob* from ſinking, when his Brother *Eſau* came furiouſly marching to deſtroy him, *Gen.* 32.12. *And thou ſaidſt, I will ſurely do thee good,* &c. The Promiſe of God ſupported him. This alſo upheld *Joſhua*, and inabled him couragiouſly to fight the Lords battels, becauſe God had ſaid, *He would never leave him, nor forſake him*, Joſh.1.5. *Melanchon* ſaith, that the *Lantgrave* of *Heſſen* told him at *Dreſda*, that it had been impoſſible for him to have born up under the manifold miſeries of ſo long an impriſonment, *Niſi habuiſſet conſolationem ex Verbo divino in ſuo corde*, but for the comforts of the Scriptures in his heart.

There are eight things may be ſaid (amongſt many other) in commendation of the Word of God.

1 It is the *Magazine* and *Storehouſe* of all comfort and conſolation. There is no condition (but one) that a man can be in, but he may find ſoul-ſupporting comfort for it out of the Word. Indeed

if thou reſolveſt to go on in ſin, the Word cannot comfort thee; it threatneth Hell and Damnation to all ſuch. If the God of Heaven can make ſuch miſerable, they ſhall be miſerable; But excepting this one, there is no condition ſo miſerable, but a man may fetch a Cordial out of the Word to ſupport him under it. Art thou as empty of riches, and as full of diſeaſes, as *Job* under the Old Teſtament, and *Lazarus* under the New Teſtament? are thy ſins (with which thou art willing to part) many and great? Is thy conſcience exceedingly wounded and diſquieted? Doth the Devil roar upon thee with hideous temptations? let thy condition be never ſo ſad, the Word of God is able to afford thee comfort under it. For it is the *Word of that God*, who is the *God of all conſolation*. There is no kind of true comfort, but here it is to be had, here are Cordials of all ſorts; Comforts under bodily troubles, and comforts under ſoul-troubles. There is no Monarch can furniſh his Table with ſuch variety of delicates, as God hath furniſhed

niſhed his Word with variety of comforts.

2 The Word of God is not only the *Magazine* of all true comfort, but the *Fountain* from whence it is derived. All the comfort that you receive by reading of good Books, is fetched out of this Book: All the refreſhings that the *Ambaſſadors of Chriſt* adminiſter to you, are borrowed from this *Fountain*. As the King of *Iſrael* anſwered the woman (that cryed out, ſaying, *Help my Lord, O King*) *If the Lord do not help thee, whence ſhall I help thee?* So will all the true Miniſters of Chriſt ſay to any diſtreſſed ſoul that crys out for comfort: How can we comfort you, if the Word of God doth not comfort you? all our comforts muſt be fetcht from thence. 2 King. 6, 26, 27.

3 It will comfort us at ſuch a time, when no outward thing can comfort us; and that is, when we are under ſoul-agonies, and when our ſoul ſits upon our lips, ready to depart; when we are falling into the Ocean of Eternity; then, even then, the Promiſes of the Word will comfort us: When

Gold and Silver, Father and Mother, Friends and Phyſicians, are miſerable comforters, then will one Promiſe out of the Word fill us full of joy unſpeakable, and glorious.

4 *The comforts of the Word exceed all other Comforts, for they are pure, and purifying, ſure and ſatisfying; they are ſoul ſupporting, ſoul comforting, and ſoul-raviſhing, they are durable and everlaſting.* The comforts of the world are not worthy to be named that day in which we ſpeak of the comforts of the Word. They are not *conſolationes*, but *conſolatiunculæ*. At beſt they are but bodily, unſatisfying, and tranſitory; many times they are ſinful, and ſoul-damning.

5 The Word of God is not only a *Magazine* and a *Fountain* of comfort, but alſo a *Touch-ſtone* by which we muſt try all our comforts whether they are true and real, or no. All joys, hopes, and aſſurances, muſt be tried by the Word, and if not rightly grounded thereupon, are falſe, and ſoul-deluſions.

6 It is an *Apothecaries Shop*, or a *Phyſicians Diſpenſatory*, out of which we may fetch all manner of *Medicines*, to cure all the diſeaſes of our ſouls. Art thou ſpiritually lame, blind, or dumb? *&c.* The Word will open blind eyes, make the dumb to ſpeak, and the Lame to walk. If dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, the Word, when it is the Sword of the Spirit, will quicken thee: It is as a Corroſive to eat ſin out of thy heart; therefore *David* ſaith, *I have hid thy Word in mine heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.*

7 It is a *ſpiritual Armory*, out of which we may fetch all manner of weapons, to conquer the Devil and his temptations, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. It is that little Brook, out of which every *David* may fetch *five ſmoothe ſtones* to deſtroy the Devil. Theſe five ſmooth ſtones, are five Texts of Scripture, three of theſe Chriſt took out of the Brook of the Word, by which he ſubdued the Devil, *Matth.* 4. 4, 7, 10.

8 It is the *Sun of the Chriſtian World.* As the *Sun* is the *light* of the

Natural World, and without it the world is but a Chaos, and a Dungeon full of darkneſs: So is the *Word of God*, the light of the ſpiritual world, without which a Chriſtian is under an eternal night. Therefore *David* ſaith, *Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*, Pſal 119. 105. What would all the world avail, if no Sun to enlighten it? and what comfort would all the wealth of it afford us, if no Word to inſtruct and counſel us? For this is the Chriſtians Compaſs to ſail to Heaven by, his ſtaff to walk withal to Heaven, his Spiritual Bladders to keep his ſoul from drowning; the Cork, to keep up the net of his ſoul from ſinking: Afflictions are like the Lead of the Net, which weigheth it down; but the Word is as the Cork, which keeps it up, that it ſinks not: So ſaith *David* in the Text, *Unleſs thy Law had been my delights*, &c.

Uſe 2. If the Word of God be of ſuch invaluable excellency, abſolute neceſſity, and of ſuch admirable uſe,

1 Let

1 Let us bleſs God exceedingly for revealing his will unto us in the Word. It was a great honour and priviledg to the *Jews*, that to them *were committed the Oracles of God*, *Rom.* 3.2. And it is our great happineſs, that we have not only the ſame Oracles of God which they have, but an addition of the New Teſtament, for the clearer diſcovery of the myſteries of ſalvation unto us. If God be to be praiſed for every crumb of bread we eat, much more for giving us his Word, which is the *bread of life*, and the only food of our ſouls. Bleſſed be God, who hath not only given us the book of the Creatures, and the book of Nature to know himſelf and his will by; but alſo, and eſpecially the book of the Scriptures, whereby we come to know thoſe things of God, and of Chriſt, which neither the book of Nature, nor of the Creatures can reveal unto us.

Let us bleſs God, not only for revealing his Will in his Word, but for revealing it by writing. Before the time of *Moſes*, God diſcovered

his Will by immediate Revelations from Heaven. But we have a ſurer word of Propheſie, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. ſurer (to us) than a voice from Heaven, For the Devil (ſaith the Apoſtle) *transforms himſelf into an Angel of light.* He hath his apparitions, and revelations; he is Gods Ape, and in imitation of God, he appears to his Diſciples, and makes them believe that it is God that appears, and not the Devil. Thus he appeared to *Saul* in the likeneſs of *Samuel.* And if God ſhould now at this day diſcover his way of Worſhip, and his Divine VVill by Revelations, how eaſily would men be deceived, and miſtake Diabolical Deluſions, for Divine Revelations; and therefore let us bleſs God for the written VVord, which is ſurer and ſafer (as to us) than an immediate Revelation. There are ſome that are apt to think; that if an Angel ſhould come from Heaven, and reveal Gods VVill to them, it would work more upon them, than the written VVord; but I would have theſe men ſtudy the conference between *Abraham* and *Dives*, Luke 16.

16. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. *Habent Moſen & Prophetas*, &c. *They have Moſes and the Prophets*; if they will not profit by them, neither would they profit by any that ſhould come out of Hell, or down from Heaven to them: for it is the ſame God that ſpeaks by his written VVord, and by a voice from Heaven. The difference is only in the outward cloathing; and therefore if Gods ſpeaking by writing, will not amend us, no more will Gods ſpeaking by a voice. *O bleſs God exceedingly for the written Word!* Let us cleave cloſe to it, and not expect any Revelations from Heaven of new truths, but ſay with the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 1. 8, 9.

Uſe 2. *Let us prize the Word of God above gold, yea above fine gold*: Let us read it diligently, reverently, praying to God to give us the ſame Spirit that wrote it, to enable us to underſtand it, and conſcientiouſly to practiſe it. Let us make it the joy and rejoycing of our heart; and as it is in the Text, let us make it our *Delights*; but of this

I ſpake in the former point. The only motive I ſhall now uſe to perſwade you to make the Word your *delights*, ſhall be this in the Text, Becauſe it *will keep you from periſhing in the time of your greateſt affliction*; It will comfort you when you have moſt need of it, that is, under heart-ſinking afflictions, and at the hour of death) and it will comfort you, when all outward comforts and creatures fail. It will be food to ſtrengthen your weak Faith, Phyſick to cure the remainders of corruptions, it will be a Cordial to revive your drooping ſpirits, and fainting ſouls: It will make you more than Conquerors over all temptations and diſtreſſes.

Queſt. But now the great Queſtion is, *How a Child of God ought to manage and make uſe of the Word of God, ſo as to make it a Conduit of ſupport and comfort in the day of his greateſt Afflictions?*

Anſw. To be able to do this, there is a great deal of ſpiritual wiſdom and underſtanding required. For the Word to many people is like *Sauls* Armor

Armor to *David*, which was ſo cumberſome to him, that he could not wear it.

There are many know not how to uſe the Word, ſo as to be comforted by it. As the Woman of *Samaria* told Chriſt, *Joh.* 4. 11. *The Well is deep, and thou haſt nothing to draw with.* So may I ſay, The Word of God is a deep Well, it is a Well of Salvation, but it is deep, and the deeper the ſweeter, but moſt people want buckets to draw with, they want a ſpiritual art to fetch out of theſe Wells of Salvation, divine ſupportation, and conſolation; and therefore to help you in this great work you muſt know, Iſa. 4.

The word of God divided into the Commanding, Threatning, and Promiſing Word.

That the Word of God may be divided into three parts; into *Commandments*, *Threatnings*, and *Promiſes*: And though a Chriſtian muſt not neglect the Commanding, and Threatning word yet, yet if ever he would make the Word a Channel of Divine Comfort, he muſt ſtudy the Promiſing-Word, for the Promiſes are a Chriſtians *Magna Charta* for Heaven. All com-

forts

fort muſt be built upon a Scripture-Promiſe, elſe it is Preſumption, not true comfort. The Promiſes are *pabulum fidei, & anima fidei*, the food of Faith, and the ſoul of faith. As Faith is the life of a Chriſtian, ſo the Promiſes are the life of Faith: *Faith is a dead Faith*, if it hath no Promiſe to quicken it; As the Promiſes are of no uſe without Faith to apply them, ſo Faith is of no uſe without a Promiſe to lay hold on. And the great reaſon why the people of God walk uncomfortably in their afflictions, is, becauſe they do not chew the promiſes; They are rare Cordials; but as a man cannot taſte the ſweetneſs of a Cordial, unleſs he chew it, no more can we receive any ſpiritual refreſhment from the Promiſes, unleſs we meditate on them. The Promiſes are as a Mine full of rich treaſure: but as Mines, unleſs we dig deep into them, we can never get the gold and ſilver hid in them, no more can we enjoy the ſoul-raviſhing comfort of the Promiſes, unleſs we dig into them by a ſerious conſideration of them. They

are

are as a Garden full of rare Flowers, able to ſweeten any condi ion : But becauſe we do not walk in this Garden and p ck ut theſe Flowers, hence it is that we live ſo diſcon ſolately, and dejectedly under our : ffli ctions. There are many rare ſtories declaring the comfort that ſome of Gods Saints have received from the Promiſes in the day of their diſtreſs. Mr. *Bilney* that bleſſed Martyr was much wounded in Conſcience, by reaſon of the great ſin he committed in ſubſcribing to the Popiſh errors, but he was much comforted by reading thoſe words, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptati n, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, of which I am the chief.* *Beza* was ſupported under his troubles, by the words of Chriſt, *Joh.* 10. 27, 28, 29. Mr. *Bolton* tells us of one that was upheld under great affliction, and comforted from *Iſa.* 26 3. Of another from *Iſa.* 57. 15. I knew a young Maid that went triumphantly to Heaven, by the refreſhing ſhe found in that well known Text, *Matth.* 11. 28.

and

and many that have been wonderfully cheared by reading the Eighth of the *Romans*, and by that Text, 1 *John* 3. 14. *We know that we have paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we love the Brethren.* The truth is, there is no Promiſe, but if God be pleaſed to *illighten* it, and ſhew us our intereſt in it, will afford a harveſt of joy. It is with Promiſes, as it is with Sermons: That Sermon which once heard, did not at all work upon us, the ſame Sermon heard at another time may exceedingly affect us. And the ſame Text of Scripture which ſometimes doth not at all comfort us, may at another time convey much comfort to us. Two men troubled in Conſcience may both of them read the ſame Chapter, and hear the ſame Sermon, and one of them may have his troubled mind pacified, and the other continue troubled; and the reaſon is, becauſe the Spirit of God makes the Word *effectual to one, and not to the other.* How often hath a diſtreſſed Saint read *Mat.* 11. 28. 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *John* 10. 27, 28. *Iſa.* 26. 3. *Iſa.* 57. 15. 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. and found

found no comfort in reading of them? But if the Spirit of God did come in, and open his eyes to behold the rich mercies wrapt up in theſe Promiſes, and his Intereſt in them, they would fill him with comfort above expreſſion. And therefore if ever you would make the Word of God, Gods inſtrument to conveigh ſupport and comfort to you in the time of ſoul-ſinking Afflictions, you muſt ſtudy the Promiſes, and pray unto God that his Spirit may irradiate them, and ſhew you the fulneſs of them, and your Intereſt in them.

Queſt. *How muſt we improve the Promiſes, ſo as to make them ſpiritual Bladders, to keep us from being drowned in the deep waters of affliction?*

Anſw. You muſt do three thirgs. Three things to be done by thoſe that would improve the Promiſes.

1 You muſt make a *Catalogue of the Promiſes.*

2 You muſt ſeriouſly *ponder and meditate on them.*

3 You muſt *apply them* to your own ſouls, as belonging to you in particular.

1 You muſt make a *Catalogue of the Promiſes*, you muſt gather them

them up, as they lie ſcattered in the Word, into a *Spiritual Noſe-gay*, and bind them together: You muſt do as they that gather up ends of Gold and Silver, you muſt loſe none. Every promiſe is as a Ray of Gold, as a Star in the firmament. And though there are ſtars of divers magnitudes, differing from one another in glory yet every ſtar hath its beauty and benefit: So though ſome Promiſes are more glorious than others, (like the Sun in compariſon of the Moon) yet every Promiſe hath its beauty, and luſtre: and as ſtar-light in a dark night is very comfortable; ſo in the dark night of affliction, every little promiſe will afford unſpeakable comfort to a troubled ſoul.

To help you in making this Catalogue, give me leave to ſuggeſt three things.

1 Be ſure to make it in time of health. Wo be to thoſe that have their Promiſes to gather, when they ſhould make uſe of them, *You that ſlight the Promiſes in proſperity, ſhall receive no comfort from them in adverſity.*

1 Forget

2 Forget not to treaſure up all thoſe Promiſes which God hath made to his children, in the day of their adverſity: As for example, God hath promiſed in *all our afflictions to be with us*; Iſa. 43. 2. *When thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they ſhall not overflow thee*, &c. he will be with you, to protect and direct you, to ſupport and comfort you. *If three Saints be put into the Fiery Furnace, the Son of God will make the fourth*, Dan. 3. 25.

2 God will be afflicted in all our afflictions, *Iſaiah* 63 9. He ſuffers in all our ſufferings, *Acts* 9. 4.

3 He will make our *Beds in our ſickneſs*, Pſal. 41. 2. He will condeſcend to the loweſt office for our eaſe and refreſhment.

4 He will *know our ſouls in adverſity*, Pſal. 31. 7. He will know us to pity us, and to ſuccour, and to help us.

5 He will keep us from the evil of all afflictions, *Job* 5. 19. God hath not promiſed to keep his people from afflictions.

afflictions, but to keep them from the hurt of them. Though they are not good in themſelves, yet he will turn them to our good, *Heb.* 12. 10. 1 *Cor.* 11. 32. *Jer.* 24. 5. The good Figs were carried into captivity for their good. God hath promiſed that all *things ſhall work together for our good*, Rom. 8. 28. not only all Ordinances, *&c.* but all Afflictions, *&c.*

6 God hath promiſed to *lay no more upon us, than we are able to bear*, but either to give us leſs pain, or greater patience, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *And though in a little wrath he hid his face from us for a moment, yet with everlaſting kindneſs will he have mercy on us, &c.* Iſa. 54. 7, 8. Theſe, and many ſuch like Promiſes, will be as ſo many ſpiritual Cordials to revive our fainting ſpirits, and as ſo many Pillars to uphold us under the greateſt affliction.

3 For the compleating of this *Catalogue*, you may make uſe of many excellent Books written for this purpoſe, wherein you ſhall have Promiſes of all kinds, both ſpiritual and temporal, gathered together: Yet let me adviſe you not to reſt ſatisfied with

with the collections of others, but when you read the Bible, and meet with a ſuitable Promiſe, with which God is pleaſed to affect your hearts, take the pains to write it down, and one ſuch Promiſe of your own writing, will work more powerfully upon your ſouls, than many others of anothers gathering. So much for the firſt, *viz. Make a Catalogue of the Promiſes.*

Mr. *Lee* on the Promiſes, Mr. *Ball*, Mr. *Bulkley*.

The end of the third Sermon.

THE

AN ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

READER,

THis and the following Sermon contains a large Diſcourſe about the Promiſes, which becauſe it may be thought by ſome to be impertinent to the Text, and rather a Digreſſion from it, than an explication of it; I crave leave to inform thee of two things.

1 That the Promiſes are the Prinpal ground of Comfort to a Child of God, in a day of his Adverſity; They are his chief City of Refuge, when all Creature-comforts fail; when he ſuffers Shipwrack of all humane props, theſe are his Planks upon which he ſwims ſafe to the ſhore of Heaven. All Comfort that is not founded upon a Promiſe, is Deluſion, not true Conſolation. And therefore a Diſcourſe about them,

them, cannot rationally be interpreted Eccentrical to the Text.

2 *That there are divers particulars added to theſe Sermons, concerning the* Nature, Neceſſity, Excellency, *and* Uſefulneſs *of the* Promiſes, *which were not mentioned in the preaching of them. And if any of them ſhall appear to be* Heterogenial *to the Text; yet if they prove ſerviceable to* heighten *thy eſteem of the Promiſes, and to quicken thee to a more ſerious & frequent* Meditation *on them, and* Application *of them, I hope thou art not at all* injured; *And I may juſtly deſire, that thou wouldſt not be* offended.

It is reported of St. Auſtin *(in his life written by* Poſſidius*) that by a digreſſion (in one of his Sermons) from his Text, he converted an* Heretick *from his erronious Opinions. If any paſſage in theſe two Sermons prove uſeful to turn thee from thy* ſinful Negligence, *and to* awaken *thee to a more diligent ſtudy of the precious Promiſes, I ſhall account it a* happy *and* bleſſed Digreſſion; *For herein eſpecially conſiſteth the difference between a* Religious Chriſtian, *and a* Moral Man. *A* Moral Man *will abſtain from the outward acts of ſin; But he knows not what it is to* live *upon* promiſes;

miſes; *He never taſted any ſweetneſs in a Promiſe; He lives upon* Creatures, *not upon* Promiſes; *and therefore when* Creatures fail, *his heart* ſinks like a ſtone, *and he is at his* Wits end, *and* Faiths end. *But a* Religious Chriſtian *lives upon* Promiſes, *and not upon* Creatures; *and therefore when* Creatures fail, *he hath the* Promiſes *to live on; He labours to taſte the ſweetneſs that is in them. He lives upon* Promiſes, *when* Providence *ſeems to run croſs to* Promiſes. *They are his* fiery Chariot, *to carry him up to Heaven. If then theſe enſuing Sermons, inflame thy affections with a greater love to the Promiſes, and a greater care to* meditate *on them, and to get an* intereſt *in them, then haſt cauſe to bleſs God, and to pray for*

Thy unworthy Servant
in Chriſt,

EDM. CALAMY.

MEDI-

MEDITATE ON THE PROMISES.

SERMON IV.

Pſal. 119. 22.

Unleſs thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine afflictions.

HE that would improve the *Promiſes*, ſo as to make them ſpiritual *Bladders*, to keep him from being *drowned* in the *deep waters of affliction*, muſt not only make a *Catalogue* of the *Promiſes*, but he muſt alſo,

2 Fixedly, and ſeriouſly *meditate* on them; firſt, he muſt treaſure up theſe Jewels in his heart, and then unlock them by *meditation*; firſt, he muſt make his *Noſe-gay*, and then ſmell

We muſt not only make a Catalogue of the Promiſes, but meditate on them.

ſmell of it. The word of God (as I have ſaid) is as a Garden full of excellent *Promiſes*, as ſo many choice flowers; and it is our duty to walk often in this Garden, to gather up all the flowers that lie ſcattered in it, into ſeveral Noſe-gayes, to bind them together (if I may ſo ſpeak) with the thread of Faith, and then every day to ſmell of them. The *Promiſes* are the *Saints Legacies* left them by Chriſt in his laſt *Will* and *Teſtament*. The Saints are called the *Heirs of the Promiſes*, Heb. 6. 17. And if they would be filled full of joy in the day of their diſtreſs, they muſt be frequent in reading theſe Legacies: The Promiſes are (as it were) the *breaſts of God*, full of the *Milk of grace and comfort*; and it is our duty to be ſucking out (by meditation) the milk of grace and comfort contained in them. That which the Prophet ſaith of the Church of Chriſt, may as truly be ſaid of the Promiſes of Chriſt. *Rejoyce O ye people of God, and be glad all ye that have an intereſt in the Pro-*
Iſa. 66. 10 *miſes: Rejoyce for joy, all ye that are*
11. *mourners in Sion, that ye may ſuck and be*

be ſatisfied with the breaſts of their conſolations, that ye may milk out, and be delightrd with the abundance of joy and comfort contained in them. The Promiſes are the Saints *Aqua vitæ* (as one calls them) the Saints Cordials, the Saints Planks to ſwim to Heaven upon, the Saints Fiery Chariot to carry them up to Heaven? And the great reaſon why they walk ſo uncomfortably, ſo diſconſolately, and ſo unbelievingly, in the time of their tribulation, is becauſe they do not ſmell of theſe *Noſe-gays*, they do not chew theſe Cordials, they do not read over theſe ſpiritual Legacies, they do not by ſerious meditation and conſideration, ſuck out the comfort comprehended in them. For as fire will not warm us unleſs we tarry at it, and as a *Bee* cannot ſuck out the honey that is in a flower, unleſs ſhe abide upon it: no more can a child of God receive ſupportation, and conſolation from the Promiſes in the hour of temptation, unleſs he ſeriouſly and ſolemnly ponder and meditate on them.

There is a double difference between a *preſumptuous ſinner*, and a

poor, humble, diſtreſſed Child of God.

The difference between a preſumptuous ſinner, and a true child of God in relation to the Promiſes.

1 A *preſumptuous ſinner* ſtudieth nothing but the Promiſing Word: He ſlights the *commanding*, and the *threatning Word*. The Word commands him to keep holy the Sabbath day, not to love the world, nor to luſt, but he turns a deaf ear to it. The Word threatneth to *wound the hairy ſcalp of every one that goeth on in his wickedneſs*; but becauſe God is patient and long-ſuffering, therefore he regards it not. But as for the Promiſing word, he ſnatcheth at it, he doth not truly lay hold on it, but ſnatcheth at it, before it belongs to him, and Spider-like, ſucks the poyſon of ſin out of it, and makes of it a Cradle to rock himſelf aſleep in ſinful courſes. Becauſe God hath promiſed, *That whenſoever a ſinner turns from his ſins which he hath committed, he ſhall ſurely live, and not die*, therefore he delays, and prorogues his turning from ſin.

But now a *poor, diſtreſſed, humble Chriſtian*, fails on the contrary part; he *pores* upon the *commanding and threatning Word*, but never ponders the *promiſing*

miſing *Word.* God (ſaith he) commands *me to love him with all my heart and ſoul, to waſh my heart from iniquity, to love my enemies, to cut off my right hand, and to pluck out my right eye,* &c. But I cannot perform theſe commands, therefore ſurely I ſhall never be ſaved. God (ſaith he) hath threatned to *curſe every one that continueth not in every thing that is written in his Law to do it*, and therefore ſurely I am accurſed. But he never ſtudies, nor ponders the promiſing Word, for if he did, he would quickly *know three things* for his everlaſting comfort.

Three obſervable things about the Promiſes.

I That *there is nothing required by God in his Word as our duty, but God hath either promiſed to beſtow it upon us as his gift, or the Saints have prayed to God for it as his gift:* God commands us to love him, but he hath promiſed to *circumciſe our hearts to love him*, &c. Deut. 30. 6. God commands us to *fear him*, to *turn our ſelves* from our tranſgreſſions, and to *make our ſelves a new heart, and a new ſpirit.* But he hath promiſed to *give us a new heart, and a new ſpirit, to put his fear in our hearts, that we ſhall never depart from him,*

Ezek. 18. 31. Ezek. 36. 26. Jer. 32. 40 Mic. 7. 19. Ro. 6. 14.

and to *turn us from our evil ways*. The Saints of God alſo have prayed unto God for this, as the fruit of his free mercy, *Jer.*31.18. *Lam.*5.21. There is nothing commanded in the Covenant of works, but God hath promiſed it in the Covenant of grace, in ſome meaſure to work it in us, for he hath promiſed to *work all our works in us*, and to *write his Law* (not one Commandment of it only, but the whole Law) *in our hearts, and to put it in our inward parts*, and to *cauſe us to walk in his ways*.

Iſa.26.12
Jer.31.33
Ez.36.27

2 *That God under the Covenant of Grace, will for Chriſts ſake accept of leſs than he requires in the Covenant of works*. He requires perfection of degrees, but he will accept of perfection of parts; he requires us to live without ſin, but he will accept of our ſincere endeavours to do it. *If there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not*, 2 Cor.8.12.

3 *That though he cannot in his own perſon perform all that God commands, yet Jeſus Chriſt, as his Surety, and in his*

his ſtead, hath fulfilled the Law for him, and that God will accept of Chriſts perfect, as a cover for his imperfect righteouſneſs. That Chriſt hath redeemed him from the curſe of the Law, being made a curſe for him. That the Threatnings of the Law are Serpents without a ſting, and that Chriſt hath taken away the power and force of them.

Did a *broken-hearted*, and *wounded* ſinner, ponder and meditate on theſe things, they would fill him full of joy and comfort; He would flye from the Covenant of Works, to the Covenant of Grace; from his own unrighteouſneſs, unto the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; and from the *commanding* and *threatning word* unto the *promiſing word*; he would ſay, Lord, Thou commandeſt me to walk in thy Statutes, and to keep thy Laws; This I cannot do of my ſelf, but thou haſt promiſed *to cauſe me to walk in thy ways*, and to *write thy Law in my heart*. Lord give me power to do what thou commandeſt, and then command what thou wilt. Domine da quod jubes, & jube quod vis. *Auſt.*

2 A *preſumptuous Sinner* is al- Second differenc.

ways ſtudying the promiſing **Word**, to bolſter up himſelf in ſin, but he never ſtudies his *ſins and iniquites, to repent for them, and from them.* He meditates on the Promiſes to harden his heart in ſin, but not at all on his ſins to humble himſelf for them, and to turn from them.

But now on the contrary, *A poor diſtreſſed Chriſtian* pores upon his *iniquities and corruptions*, but never minds himſelf of the *Promiſes*; and this makes him live ſo dejectedly, and diſconſolately: A wicked man ſtudieth his Corruptions too little; A diſtreſſed Chriſtian too much. If he did ſtudy the Promiſes, as much as he doth his corruptions, he would not walk ſo uncomfortably.

Wherefore if ever you would make the *Word of God a Conduit of comfort* in the day of your diſtreſs; you muſt not only meditate on the *commanding* and *threatning word*, but on the *promiſing word.* The commandments and threatnings muſt drive you to the Promiſes; you muſt not only ſtudy your corruptions to humble you, but alſo the Promiſes to comfort you. I do not

ſay

ſay you muſt not ſtudy your corruptions, but you muſt joyn the ſtudy of the Promiſes together with them. If *Abraham* had minded only the deadneſs of *Sarahs* womb, and of his own body, he had never believed, *&c.* but he was ſtrong in faith, and ſtaggered not, becauſe he *conſidered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, nor the deadneſs of* Sarahs *womb, but was fully perſwaded, that what God had promiſed, he was able to perform.* If *Sarah* had conſidered only that ſhe was paſt age, ſhe would never have believed that ſhe ſhould have a child; but ſhe eyed the Promiſe, and *judged him faithful, who had promiſed,* and that made her believe. If a Saint of God looks only downwards upon the deadneſs of his heart, and meditates only upon his ſins and infirmities, he will never be comforted in the day of his diſtreſs. But he muſt alſo look upwards unto the Promiſes, ſeriouſly ponder, and fixedly ſtudy them; which will be as ſtrong pillars to ſupport him, and keep him from falling into deſpair, in the hour of tribulation.

Rom. 4. 19, 20, 21

Heb. 11. 11.

Queſt. *What are the* Meditations *which we muſt have in reference and relation to the Promiſes in the day of our diſtreſs?*

Anſw. I will rank them into nine particulars.

1 You muſt meditate upon the three great truths already mentioned.

The firſt meditation about the Promiſes.

1 That God commands nothing as our duty, which he hath not promiſed, as his gift.

2 That God in the Covenant of Grace, will accept of leſs than he requires in the Covenant of works.

3 That if we truly believe in Chriſt, God will accept of his righteouſneſs as a ſatisfaction for our unrighteouſneſs.

The ſecond meditation meditate on the preciouſneſs of the Promiſes.

2 You muſt meditate upon the excellency and preciouſneſs of the Promiſes, they are called τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἐπαγγέλματα, *exceeding great and precious Promiſes*; They are precious in five reſpects:

2 Pet. 1. 4 The Promiſes are precious in five reſpects.

1 Becauſe they *coſt a great price* (even the blood of Chriſt) *to purchaſe them.* They are all made to us *in Chriſt*, and *for Chriſt*; they are

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in him, *yea*, and in him, *Amen*. The Covenant (which is the Pandecta and Cabinet of all the Promiſes) was ſealed with his blood. 2 Cor. 1. 20.

1 Becauſe they *aſſure us of great and precious things*; they aſſure us of our *Intereſt in God*, of our *Juſtification*, *Reconciliation*, *Adoption*, *Sanctification*, and *Glorification*: Heaven it ſelf is nothing elſe but the *enjoyment of the Promiſes*, Heb. 6. 12. The Promiſes are Heaven folded up; Heaven is the Promiſe unfolded. For the Promiſes are nothing elſe, but the *eternal purpoſes of God towards his Children made manifeſt*. The Purpoſes of God are his concealed Promiſes; and the Promiſes are his Revealed Purpoſes. The Promiſes are the kiſſes of Jeſus Chriſt, they diſcover his dear love; and when he diſcovers to us our intereſt in them, then he *kiſſes us with the kiſſes of his mouth, and fills us with joy unſpeakable and glorious*. They are made by God, and they make over God to us, as our Portion, and Chriſt as our Saviour, and the Spirit as our Sanctifier, and

all good things both here and hereafter as our Inheritance, and therefore may well be called *exceeding great and precious Promiſes.*

3 Becauſe they put a price upon the New Teſtament; for wherein doth the New Teſtament exceed the Old, unleſs it be in this, becauſe it is *founded upon better Promiſes?* Heb. 8. 6. and *bringeth in a better hope*, Heb. 7. 19.

4 Becauſe they put a *price upon all the bleſſings of God.* A little mercy reached out to us, as a fruit of a Promiſe, is more worth than a world of bleſſings coming to us meerly by way of Providence. A man may receeive bleſſings from God upon a double account, either *ex largitate*, or *ex promiſſo*, either by way of Providence, or by way of Promiſe. 1 By way of Providence: *Thus God gives the earth to the Sons of men*, Pſal. 115. 16. Thus he gave one hundred twenty and ſeven Provinces to *Ahaſhuerus*. Thus he ſets up the *baſeſt of men to rule over Nations*, Dan. 4. 7.

2 By *way of promiſe.* Thus he gives health, wealth, and all outward

ward comforts unto his Children. For *godlineſs hath the Promiſe of this life, and that which is to come*, 1 Tim. 4. 8. Now you muſt know that a little bleſſing coming to us, as a fruit of the Promiſe, is more worth than a thouſand bleſſings coming to us, only by way of Providence. And therefore *David* ſaith, *A little that the righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked*, Pſal. 37. 16. And the reaſon is,

1 Becauſe bleſſings given by vertue of a promiſe, are ſigns of Gods ſpecial love, and come flowing to us from the ſame love with which God gives us Chriſt, they are the fruit of Covenant-love.

2 Becauſe we have them as bleſſings. A man may have a bleſſing, and yet not have it as a bleſſing. The *Iſraelites* had Quails ſent them immediately from God, which was a bleſſing in it ſelf, but was not ſent to them as a bleſſing: For while *the meat was in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them.* The wicked have bleſſings, but not as bleſſings, but as the Cup in *Benja-* Pſal. 78. 30, 31.

mins Sack, which proved a ſnare to him, rather than a mercy. But the Godly have bleſſings as bleſſings: They have grace with them to improve them for Gods glory, they have not only the bleſſings, but a thankful heart for them, and a fruitful heart under them, which is a certain ſign that they have them as bleſſings.

3 Becauſe they are pledges to them of better mercies, and beginnings of better, they are not *merces*, but *arrha* not their *wages*, but an *earneſt* of Heaven. Now a Farthing given as an earneſt of a thouſand a year, is more worth than many pounds given as a reward. A wicked man hath outward bleſſings as his Portion, his Heaven, his All; but a Godly man that hath them *by vertue of a Promiſe*, hath them as a *pledg of Heaven*, and as a *beginning of eternal mercies*.

5 The Promiſes are Precious, becauſe they *produce great and precious effects*; They are not only excellent in themſelves, but are alſo very powerful and operative upon all Believers. The Promiſes (as one ſaith) ſealed by the blood of Chriſt, *ratified by*

by the Oath of God, teſtified by the *Spirit of Truth*, delivered by the *hand of Mercy*, and received by the *hand of Faith*, are operative words, and produce rare effects in the ſoul. They have

1 *A Sanctifying* } *Power.*
2 *A Comforting* }

1 *A Soul-Sanctifying Power.* Therefore they are ſaid to make us *partakers of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. I ſay, *of the Divine Nature*, not by the communication of the *Divine Eſſence*, but by participation of *Divine Graces*. Not in a *Familiſtical ſenſe*, (as if we were Godded into God, and Chriſted into Chriſt) but in a *ſpiritual ſenſe*; we are by the Promiſes made partakers of the *Divine Nature*, that is, of the *Divine Graces*, by which we are made like to God in holineſs. The Apoſtle tells us, that they have a power to *cleanſe us from all filthineſs both of fleſh and ſpirit, and to enable us to perfect holineſs in his fear*, 2 Cor. 7. 1.

2 A *Comforting Power*. They are able to comfort us in the worſt of days,

days, and dangers. O how precious is a promiſe to a diſtreſſed Chriſtian, in the hour of extremity! The Sun is not more comfortable to a man in a dark Dungeon, or food to a man ready to ſtarve, or water to a man ready to die for thirſt. The Promiſes of God are always precious, but never more precious than in times of miſery and calamity; and therefore let us in ſuch times eſpecially meditate upon the preciouſneſs of them.

The third Meditation, Meditate on the freeneſs of the promiſes.

3 You muſt *meditate* upon the *freeneſs* of the promiſes. The promiſes are the outward diſcoveries of Gods eternal love to his people. Now nothing moved God to enter into Covenant with them, and to engage himſelf to them by promiſe, and thereby to become their debtor, but his free love and mercy; and therefore they are ſaid to be given us of God, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promiſes.* God promiſeth in his Word, not only to love us, but to love us freely, *Hoſ.* 14. 4. *I will heal their back-ſliding, and love them freely.* The reaſon why God makes us his

his people, is not from any worth in us, but only becauſe it pleaſeth him ſo to do, 1 *Sam.* 12. 22. *The Lord will not forſake his people for his great Names ſake, becauſe it pleaſed the Lord to make you his people.* The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is the great and fundamental Promiſe, the root of the other Promiſes, is freely tendred in the Goſpel, and freely given, *Joh.* 3.16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,* &c. Rev. 22. 17. *Whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

The fourth Meditation, meditate on the ſtability of the Promiſes.

4 You muſt meditate on the *firmneſs, faithfulneſs, unchangeableneſs*, and *immutability* of the Promiſes: they are the Promiſes of that God, who cannot deny himſelf. *Promiſſa hæc tua ſunt Domine* (ſaith *Auſtin*) *& quis falli timet, cum promittit ipſa veritas*; *Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but one jot or tittle of the Word ſhall not paſs.* There is no promiſe which God hath made, though never ſo improbable, and impoſſible to fleſh and blood, but it ſhall come to paſs in due time; whatſo-

whatſoever he hath promiſed in *his goodneſs*, he will perform by *his power*. *God is not a man that he ſhould lie, neither the Son of man that he ſhould repent: Hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good?* Numb. 23. 19. God hath promiſed that the ſame bodies that die, ſhall riſe again at the laſt day. This is incredible to natural Reaſon. The *Stoicks* and *Epicures* derided it, when it was preached by *Paul*, Act. 17. 32. But hath God ſaid it, and ſhall he not do it? *Is the Lords hand ſhortned?* Therefore Chriſt tells the Sadduces, *Matth.* 22. 27. *You err, not knowing the Scriptures, and the power of God.* God is *Omnipotent*, and therefore able to *do above what we can ask or think*: God hath promiſed at the Reſurrection, to make our *vile bodies like unto the glorious body of Chriſt.* This is impoſſible to natural reaſon, but mark what the Apoſtle ſaith, *Phil.* 3. 21. *Who ſhall change our vile bodies, and faſhion them like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to ſubdue all things to himſelf.* God hath

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promiſed, that before the end of the world, there ſhall be a *National converſion of the Jews*; *that the Kingdoms of the world ſhall become the Kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour*; And that *Babylon ſhall fall.* Theſe are the Promiſes of God, who cannot lie; *Faithful is he, who hath ſaid it, who alſo will do it*, 1 Theſ. 5.24. Though the things promiſed ſeem impoſſible to men, yet with God all things are poſſible: Therefore the Apoſtle proves the future Converſion of the *Jews* by an Argument drawn from the power of God, *Rom.* 11.23. *God is able to graft them in again.* The like is brought to prove the ruin of Antichriſt, *Rev.* 18. 8. *Her plagues ſhall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and ſhe ſhall be utterly burnt with fire, for ſtrong is the Lord God, who judgeth her:* The Promiſes are a firm Foundation to build our Salvation upon, an Anchor both ſure and ſtedfaſt. When *David* was taken by the *Philiſtins*, he was ſo ſupported by the Promiſe of God, that he did not fear what man could do againſt him; there-

Rom. 11. 25, 26. Rev. 11. 15. Rev. 18.2

Mat. 19. 26.

therefore he repeats it three times, Pſal. 56. 3, 10. *In God I will praiſe his Word, in God I will praiſe his Word; in God I will praiſe his Word:* (that is, his Word of Promiſe) *I will not fear what fleſh can do unto me:* the Scripture builds all the hope and comfort of a Chriſtian upon the *faithfulneſs of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 9. *God is faithful, by whom*, &c: 1 Theſ. 5. 23, 24. 1 Cor. 10. 13. *God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able*, &c: 2 Theſ. 3. 3. *The Lord is faithful, who ſhall eſtabliſh you*, &c. *Heb.* 10. 33 *For he is faithful that hath promiſed.* Memorable is that ſaying of *David*, Pſal. 138. 2. *For thou haſt magnified thy Word above all thy Name:* Which words are to be underſtood (as *David Kimhi*, and our *Engliſh* Annotations ſay) *Hyſteron proteron*; that is, thou haſt by thy Word (that is, by performing thy Word and promiſes) *Magnified thy Name above all things*; or as *Ainſworth*, Thy word of promiſe in Chriſt, and thy faithfulneſs in performing of it, doth more exalt thy name, than any thing by which thou art made known. (a

the

then let all the Saints of God, who are heirs of the promiſes, meditate frequently upon the *preciouſneſs, freeneſs, firmneſs, unchangableneſs*, and *immutability* of them.

5 You muſt meditate upon the *fulneſs* and *richneſs* of the promiſes. The promiſes are the *Saints Magazine* and *ſpiritual Treaſure*; they are called the *unſearchable Riches of Chriſt*, Epheſ. 3. 6, 7. It is one of the greateſt titles belonging to a Saint, to be ſtiled *an Heir of the Promiſes*. That man that hath a right to all the promiſes in the Bible, is the richeſt man in the world; For *God is his* (and he that hath him that hath all things, hath all things) *Chriſt is his* (and Chriſt is all in all) the *Spirit is his* (and he who hath the Spirit, hath all good things, as appears by comparing *Matth.* 7. 11. with *Luk.* 11. 13. In the firſt it is ſaid——*How much more ſhall your Father in Heaven, give good things*, &c. In the ſecond, *How much more ſhall you Heavenly Father give the holy Spirit*, &c?) Grace and Glory, and all outward good things are his.

The fifth meditation on meditate on the richneſs of the Promiſes. Heb. 8. 17.

Qui habet habentem omnia, habet omnia.

his. It is ſaid of the *Great Duke of Guiſe*, that (though he was poor, as to his preſent poſſeſſions) yet he was the richeſt man in *France*, in Bills, Bonds, and Obligations, becauſe he had ingaged all the Noble-men in *France* unto himſelf, by preferring of them. A true and real Chriſtian is the richeſt man in the world, in Promiſes and Obligations, for he hath the Great God engaged by promiſe to be his God, and the *God of his*. As *Charles* the firſt, commanded his *Herald* in a Challenge to *Francis* the firſt, King of *France*, to proclaim him with all his titles, ſtiling him *Emperor of Germany*, *King of Caſtile*, *Arragon*, *Naples*, *Sicily*, &c. But *Francis* commanded his *Herald*, to call him ſo often King of *France*, as the other had titles by all his Countrys; implying, that *France* alone was more worth than all his Countries. So when a wicked man brags of his *Lordſhips*, and great poſſeſſions, when he boaſteth of his thouſands a year, a *Child of God* may ſay, *God is mine*, *God is mine*, &c. I am richer than all the wicked men in the world.

6 You

6 You muſt meditate on the Latitude and extenſion of the Promiſes. The Promiſes are the *Saints Catholicon*, and *Panacea*. There is no condition a child of God can be in, but he may find, not only a promiſe, but a ſuitable and ſeaſonable promiſe to comfort him in it. And herein eſpecially conſiſteth the *ſpiritual Excellency*, and *Heavenly Wiſdom of a Chriſtian*, not only to ſtudy the promiſes in general, but to labour to find out; and having found out, to meditate upon ſuch kind of Promiſes which are moſt ſuitable, and moſt ſeaſonable to the condition he is in. As for example.

The ſixth meditation meditate on the latitude and extenſion of the Promiſes.

If thou art poor in eſtate, meditate on *Pſal.* 34. 10. *Mat.* 6. 33. *Heb.* 13. 5.

If barren, and without children, meditate on *Iſa.* 56. 5.

If perſecuted for Chriſts ſake, meditate on *Mat.* 5. 10. 1 *Pet.* 4. 12, 13, 14. *Pſal.* 94. 12.

If ſick, and under tormenting pains, meditate on *Pſal.* 50. 15. *Iſa.* 63. 9. *Rom.* 8. 28.

If reproached, ſlandered, and falſly

falſly accuſed, meditate on *Matth.* 10. 25. *Mat.* 5. 11, 12. *Luke* 6. 22, 23.

If Satan tempts thee, and thou art not able to reſiſt him, meditate on *Rom.* 16. 20. 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *Gen.* 3. 15. 1 *Joh.* 3. 8.

If thy corruptions be too ſtrong for thee, meditate on *Rom.* 6. 14. *Mic.* 7. 19.

If God hides his face from thee, and thou ſitteſt in darkneſs, and ſeeſt no light, meditate on *Iſa.* 50. 10. *Iſa.* 54. 7, 8.

If ready to faint in waiting upon God, and in expecting the fulfilling of his promiſes, meditate on *Iſa.* 30. 18. *Iſa.* 63. 3. *Iſa.* 40. 28, 29, 30. *Mal.* 3. 1.

If ready to die, and full of fears and doubts, meditate on 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56, 57. *Heb.* 13. 14. *Rev.* 14. 13. 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 8.

The ſeventh meditation, meditate on the variety of the Promiſes.

7 You muſt meditate on the variety of the Promiſes, and their difference and diſtinction one from the other. The Promiſes are like unto the Stars in the Firmament.

1 For their multitude, they are very

very many. The Scripture is beſpangled with Promiſes, as the Heavens are with Stars. It were happy if the Saints would prove *ſpiritual Aſtronomers*, and make it their work to ſtudy the nature of theſe Stars.

2 For their *beauty, excellency*, and *influence*. Every Star is beautiful in its kind, and very uſeful and advantagious, ſo are the Promiſes. And as the Stars are moſt comfortable in the darkneſs of the night; ſo are the Promiſes in the night of trouble and adverſity.

3 And eſpecially for their *diſtinction and difference*. For one Star differs from another in glory, 1 *Cor.* 15.41. *There is one glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, another of the Stars.* So do the Promiſes differ exceedingly one from the other in beauty and excellency Some are temporal, ſome ſpiritual, ſome of things that are eternal; Some are conditional, ſome abſolute; Some are promiſes to thoſe that have grace, ſome are promiſes of grace; Some are general, others particular; Some are Original, Fundamen-

damental, and Fountain-promiſes (as the promiſe of Jeſus Chriſt, of God being our God, and of the Holy Ghoſt.) Others are *derivative*, *depending*, and *rivulet promiſes*, (as the promiſes of all outward comforts here, and of eternal life hereafter:) Now it is our duty to take notice of every Ray of Gold, to meditate upon all the Promiſes, both *ſpiritual*, *temporal*, and *eternal*; both *conditional*, and *abſolute*; both of *grace*, and to *grace*; both *general*, and *particular*; but eſpecially of the *Original* and *Fundamental Promiſes*, the *Fountain-promiſes*, from whence all others, as ſo many ſtreams and rivolets, are deduced and derived.

The eight meditation meditate on the uſefulneſs of the Promiſes.

8 You muſt meditate on the *uſefulneſs*, and *profitableneſs* of the Promiſes. I have already ſhewed you, that they are the *Conduits of grace* and *comfort*, that they have a *ſoul ſanctifying*, and a *ſoul-comforting-power*. Give me leave to add, That the Promiſes are,

1 The *breathings* of Divine love and affection.

2 The *life* and *ſoul* of Faith.

3 The

3. The *Anchor* of Hope.
4. The *Wings* of Prayer.
5. The *Foundation* of Induſtry.
6. The *Rayes* and *Beams* of the Son of Righteouſneſs; And upon all theſe accounts are very uſeful and advantagious.

1. They are the *breathings of Divine love and affection.* It is an Argument of Gods wonderful love to his children, that he is pleaſed to enter into a Promiſe and Covenant to be their God, and to give them Chriſt, and in Chriſt all bleſſings here, and hereafter. We Read *Gen.* 17. 2, 3. when God told *Abraham* that he would make a Covenant *with him, he fell on his face as aſtoniſhed* at ſo great a mercy, and as thankfully *acknowledging* the goodneſs of God towards him. The like we read of *David:* When God by *Nathan* made a promiſe to him, he goes into *Gods houſe, and prays. Who am I, O Lord, and what is my Houſe, that the Lord my God ſhould do this! &c.* The Promiſes are the *Cabinets of the tender bowels of God*, they contain the dear and tender love of God towards his e-

The Promiſes are the breathings of Divine love.

2 Sam. 7. 11, 18, 19.

lect children; God by promiſing, makes himſelf a debtor to them. Now that God, who is bound to none (no not to the Angels of Heaven) ſhould enter into bonds; and bind himſelf to give grace and glory to his elect children, this is love above expreſſion! And there is nothing moved God to do this, but (as I have ſaid) his free grace and mercy. For though God be now bound out of juſtice and faithfulneſs to fulfill his *Promiſes*, yet nothing moved him to make theſe Promiſes, but his love and mercy, as *David* ſaith of what God had promiſed to him, 2 *Sam.* 7. 21. *According to thine own heart (ex mero motu voluntatis) and according to thy Word*, not for any thing in me, *For what am I, O Lord!* &c? Thus you ſee how the Promiſes are the *breathings of divine love and affection*, and upon *this account* are they very uſeful and profitable. For *love is loves Load-ſtone*; therefore the Apoſtle ſaith, *We love him, becauſe he loved us firſt.* The ſenſe of Gods love to us, will kindle a love in us to God. Even as the beams of the Sunre-

Magnes amoris amor.

1 Joh. 4. 19.

flecting

flecting upon a Wall, heats thoſe that walk by the Wall: So the beams of *Gods love* ſhining into our ſouls, warms our hearts with the *love of God. The love of God conſtrains us*, as ſaith *Paul*, 2 Cor. 5 14. There is a *compulſive* and *conſtraining power* in love. What did not *Jacob* do for the love of *Rachel?* How was *Mephiboſheth* affected with the love of *David?* 2 Sam. 19. 8. It is our duty to love thoſe that hate us; but not to love thoſe that love us, is more than *heatheniſh* and *brutiſh.*

2. They are *the life and ſoul of Faith.* Faith without a *Promiſe* to act upon, is as a body without a ſoul, as a *dead flower* which hath no *beauty or ſweetneſs in it*; But Faith grounded upon the Promiſes, will inable a Chriſtian to advance in all manner of holineſs: What made *Abraham forſake his Country, and his Fathers houſe, and go he knew not whither?* Nothing moved him to this, but becauſe God had promiſed to make him a great Nation, and he believed it. Of all graces, none ſo cauſal of holineſs as the grace

The Promiſes are the life and ſoul of Faith.

of Faith: It is a *world-overcoming, heart purifying, life-ſanctifying, wonder-working Grace*; and therefore the Promiſes muſt needs be very uſeful, becauſe they are the life and ſoul of faith.

The Promiſes are the Anchor of Hope.

3. They are the *Anchor of Hope*. Hope is called an *Anchor of the ſoul, both ſure and ſtedfaſt*; But the *Promiſes* are the *Anchor* of Hope. All Hope of Heaven, which is not founded upon a *Promiſe*, is *Preſumption*, and not *Hope*. *Preſumption* is, when a man hopes to go to Heaven upon no ground, or upon an inſufficient ground. But *true hope* is a *Hope grounded* upon a *Scripture-Promiſe*: And *Hope* bottomed upon *Divine Promiſes*, will mightily avail unto purity and holineſs. *Abraham, Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, lived as *Pilgrims* and *Strangers upon Earth, becauſe they looked and hoped for a City which hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God*. The Old Teſtament Saints would not *accept deliverance upon ſinful terms, becauſe they hoped for a better Reſurrection*. The Papiſts and Arminians are much miſtaken in teaching, That the

Heb. 6. 9.

Heb. 11. 9, 10.

Heb. 11.

the *aſſurance of Salvation is an enemy to godlineſs.* The Scripture ſaith the quite contrary, 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. *He that hath this hope, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure.* The true *Hope of Heaven, will make us live Heavenly.*

4 They are the *Wings of Prayer:* Prayer is a Divine Cordial to convey grace from Heaven into our ſouls: It is a *Key* to unlock the bowels of mercy, which are in God. The beſt way to obtain *Holineſs*, is upon our knees; the beſt poſture to fight againſt the Devil, is upon our knees: and therefore Prayer is not put as a part of our *Spiritual-Armour*, but added as that which muſt be an ingredient in every part, and which will make every part effectual. But now the Promiſes are the *Wings of Prayer.* Prayer without a promiſe, is as a *Bird without wings:* And therefore we read both of *Jacob* and *Jehoſhaphat*, how they urged God in their prayer, with his promiſes. And certainly the *Prayers* of the *Saints winged with Divine Promiſes*, will quickly fly up to Heaven, and draw down Grace and

The Promiſes are the wings of Prayer.

2 Chron. 20. 8, 9.

comfort into their ſouls. And upon this account it is, that the promiſes are ſo uſeful to a Chriſtian, becauſe they are ſo helpful in prayer. When we pray, we muſt urge God with his Promiſes, and ſay, Lord, haſt thou not ſaid, *Thou wilt circumciſe our hearts to love thee, thou wilt ſubdue our ſins, thou wilt give the Spirit to thoſe that ask it?* Lord! Thou art faithful, fulfill theſe thine own Promiſes: and we muſt remember this great Truth, *That the Promiſes God makes to us, to mortifie our ſins for us, are greater helps againſt ſin, than our promiſes to God to mortifie ſin.* Many men in the day of their diſtreſs, vow and promiſe to leave ſin, and fight againſt it in the ſtrength of theſe promiſes; and inſtead of *Conquering* ſin, are *Conquered* by ſin. But if we fight againſt ſin in the ſtrength of Chriſt, and of his Promiſes; if we urge God in Prayer with his own Word, we ſhall at laſt get victory over it: For he hath ſaid, *That ſin ſhall not have dominion over us*, Rom. 6. 14.

The Promiſes are the foundation of induſtry.

5 They are the *Foundation of Induſtry*. The Promiſes do not make men

men *lazie and idle*, as ſome ſcandalouſly ſay, but they are the ground of all true *labour and induſtry*; therefore the Apoſtle perſwades us from the conſideration of the Promiſes unto the ſtudy of ſoul-purification, to have our Converſation without covetouſneſs; *to flee from Idolatry, and to ſeparate our ſelves from ſinful communion.* Divine Promiſes are great incouragements unto ſpiritual diligence.

1 Cor. 7. 1. Heb. 13 1 1 Cor. 10. 13, 14. 2 Cor. 6. 17, 18.

Object. *Though* conditional *Promiſes be the foundation of Induſtry (becauſe we cannot have the thing Promiſed, unleſs we perform the conditions)* yet abſolute *Promiſes* (ſay ſome) *are foundations of lazineſs, and therefore they affirm, there are no* abſolute Promiſes in *Scripture.*

Anſw. Abſolute Promiſes are made Foundations of Induſtry in Scripture, as well as *Conditional:* The Apoſtle exhorts us to *Work out our Salvation with fear and trembling, becauſe it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure.* And the reaſon is, becauſe God performeth nothing which he promiſeth, though never ſo abſo-

Phil. 2. 12 13.

lutly, but in the *diligent and conſcientious uſe of the means on our part.* God promiſeth *Ezek.* 36. 26. *to give us a new heart, and a new ſpirit, &c.* but then he adds, *verſ.* 37. *I will yet for this, be inquired of by the houſe of Iſrael.*

The Promiſes are the rays & beams of the Sun of Righteouſneſs.

6. They are *rayes* and *beams* (as one ſaith) *of Chriſt the Sun of righteouſneſs*, in whom they are founded and eſtabliſhed. As all the Lines in a Circumference, though never ſo diſtant, carry a man to one and the ſame *Center*. So all the *Promiſes*, carry us to *Chriſt the Center.* For the *Promiſes* are not made for any thing in us, nor have they any ſtability from us; but they are made in, and for Chriſt unto us, unto Chriſt in our behalf; and unto us, ſo far as we are members of Chriſt. Now Jeſus Chriſt is the ground of all ſoul-purification, ſoul conſolation, and ſoul-ſalvation; And therefore I may ſafely conclude, That the Promiſes are moſt ſingularly uſeful, and advantageous. And that it is the duty of all thoſe that deſire to live holily and comfortably, to conſider and ponder the profitable-

Dr. *Reynolds* on the ſinfulneſs of ſin.

neſs

neſs and beneficialneſs, of the Promiſes.

9. And laſtly, You muſt meditate on the *great neceſſity that lyeth upon all men to get a Scripture Intereſt in the Promiſes.* This I add to awaken Chriſtians to attend diligently to this Diſcourſe about the Promiſes, and to ſhew them the neceſſity of minding, and of ſtudying them. For he that hath no right to them, is in a *faithleſs*, *hopeleſs*, *comfortleſs*, *deſperate*, and *damnable condition.* All the happineſs of a Chriſtian both here and hereafter, conſiſteth eſpecially in his right and title to the Promiſes. The Scripture tells us in expreſs words, that he that is a *ſtranger from the Promiſe, is without Chriſt, without God, without hope.* Sad is the condition of that man, who hath no Intereſt in God, nor in Chriſt, and who is without hope. And ſuch is the condition of him who is a ſtranger to the Promiſes; for all hope of Heaven, which is not *bottomed* upon a *Promiſe*, is *preſumption*, and *ſoul-deluſion.* All comfort and joy which is not grounded upon a Promiſe, is *ſoul-couzenage*; and

The 9th. Meditation, meditate on the neceſſity of getting an intereſt in the Promiſes.

Eph. 2. 12

and all faith not anchored upon a Promiſe, is nothing elſe but *flattery*, and *ſoul-mockery*. Conſider this, you that are full of joy and comfort, and (as you ſay) relie upon Chriſt for Salvation: Tell me, what Promiſe have you to build this faith, this hope, this comfort upon? For there are thouſands that flatter themſelves into Hell by a falſe hope of *Heaven*; thouſands which promiſe to themſelves to go to Heaven, but have no *Promiſe* for it *from God*. Such were the *five fooliſh Virgins*, ſuch was the Church of *Laodicea*, ſuch were they, *Matth.* 7. 24. *Hoſ.* 8. 2, 3. *Micah* 3. 10, 11. Remember this, and let it be daily in your thoughts: you that have not true right to the Promiſes, your *Faith* is *Faction*, your *Hope* is *Preſumption*, and your *Joy* is *Deluſion*. To be a *ſtranger from the Promiſe*, is to be *without God*, *without Chriſt*, and *without Hope*. So much for the ſecond particular, viz. *Meditate on the Promiſes.*

The end of the fourth Sermon.

RULES

RULES FOR THE RIGHT APPLICATION OF THE PROMISES.

SERMON V.

Pſal. 119. 92.

Unleſs thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine afflictions.

NOw I come to the third and laſt particular. He that would make the *Promiſes* as ſpiritual bladders to keep him from drowning in the deep waters of affliction, muſt not only make a *Catalogue* of them, and *meditate* upon them, but he muſt make *Application* of them

to

to his own ſoul, as belonging to him in particular; He muſt (as it is ſaid of the godly Patriarchs, *Heb.* 11. 13.) *be perſwaded of them, and imbrace them*; he muſt hugg and kiſs them as his *rich portion*, and *glorious inheritance*. And this is the chief of all: For no man can receive any comfort from a Promiſe, who is not able to make out his intereſt in that Promiſe. As the life of a Sermon is in the Application of it unto our ſelves; ſo the life of a *Promiſe* is in the appropriation of it. *Quid eſt Deus, ſi non eſt meus?* What am I the better (ſaith *Origen*) that Chriſt took upon him the *fleſh of a Virgin*, if he took not *my fleſh?* What was the great Prince the better for the miraculous plenty in *Samaria*, when the Prophet told him that he ſhould *ſee it with his eyes, but not eat of it?* As the man, who when he was ready to be drowned, ſaw a Rain-bow (which was a ſign that the World ſhould never be again drowned) ſaid, *Quid mihi proderit hæc Iris, ſi ego peream? What am I the better for this Rain-bow, if I periſh?* So may I ſay, what is a man the bet-

better for the rich Mine of treaſure contained in the promiſes, if he hath no ſhare in it?

There are three ſorts of Profeſſors of Religion.

1. Some lay claim to the *Promiſes*, when they have no right to them; ſuch are your *preſumptuous ſinners*, who take it for granted, that the Promiſes belong to them, who preſume themſelves into Hell by a falſe hope in the Promiſes; who make a *Feather-bed* of the Promiſes, upon which they ſleep ſecurely in ſin: As *Thraſilaus* (*a mad Athenian*) laid claim to every Ship that came to *Athens*, though he had right to none: So a preſumptuous ſinner lays a claim to every promiſe, though he hath right to none; he inlargeth them beyond their bounds, and maketh the conditional Promiſes to be abſolute; and ſuch as belong only to thoſe that are in Chriſt, to belong to him, though he be not in Chriſt: He ſucks the *poyſon* of ſin, and ſecurity, out of the *ſweet* Flowers of the *Promiſes*.

2. Some have an intereſt in the *Promiſes*,

Promiſes, and know their intereſt; theſe live in Heaven while they are upon earth; theſe *rejoyce in tribulation*, and are *more than Conquerours* over the greateſt afflictions; theſe are ſecure from periſhing in the day of diſtreſs. That man, who taking the Bible into his hand, can ſay upon right grounds, *All the Promiſes in this book are my portion*, and I have a right and title to them, this man is *happy above expreſſion.*

3. Some have an intereſt in the *Promiſes*, but do not know their intereſt, and therefore dare not (in the hour of trouble) apply them for ther *ſupportation and conſolation.* Such are your *broken-hearted, wounded, diſtreſſed*, and *deſerted Chriſtians*: Such can receive no comfort from the Promiſes in the day of affliction. When they begin to apply them for their ſupport, the Devil ſuggeſteth to them, and their own doubting hearts tell them, that they miſ-apply them, and that they belong not to them. When a godly Miniſter (whoſe office is to *ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to thoſe that are weary*, Iſa. 50. 4.) indeavours by the Application

plication of the Promiſes to comfort them, their *ſouls refuſe to be comforted*, they exclude themſelves from having a right to Chriſt, and his *Promiſes*, though Chriſt would not have them excluded. They groundleſly fear that their names are written in the *black Book of Reprobation*, and that all the curſes of the Law are their portion; hence it is that they live ſo uncomfortably and diſconſolately in the time of affliction. Now then for the help of ſuch perſons, who have a true title to the Promiſes, but know it not, who *walk in darkneſs, and ſee no light*, who believe they are Hypocrites, when they are not, and that they are not in Chriſt, when they are; (that I may be Gods inſtrument to inable ſuch to make Application of the precious Promiſes unto their own Souls in particular, in the hour of trouble, for their everlaſting ſupportation and conſolation) I ſhall lay down theſe enſuing Rules and Directions.

The firſt Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

Rule 1.

1. Whoſoever in a Goſpel-ſenſe doth obey the *commanding word of God*,

God, hath a real intereſt in the *Promiſing word of God:* Though thou canſt not perfectly obey the will of God, yet if thou doſt *truly deſire*, and *induſtriouſly endeavour* to obey it in all things; If God hath written his Law in thy heart, and given thee a Goſpel-frame, inclining thee to the obedience of all his Commandments ſincerely, though not perfectly; this is an infallible evidence, that thou haſt a right and portion in all the Promiſes. This is that which God ſaith, *If you will obey my voice in deed, then ye ſhall be a peculiar treaſure*, &c. If ye will obey my voice in deed, not only in word, and in ſhew, but in deed, and in truth. Thus *Jer.* 7. 5, 7. *If ye thorowly amend your ways, if ye thorowly execute judgment*, &c. *then will I cauſe you to dwell in this place*, &c. If ye thorowly amend, &c. not only in ſome things, but in all things; not only outwardly, but inwardly alſo. This Rule is expreſly delivered by the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. *Godlineſs hath the promiſe of the life that now is, and that which is to come.* If thou beeſt a godly man

Exod. 19 5.

in

in a Goſpel-ſenſe, that is, one who truly and ſincerely endeavoureth to be godly; If thou makeſt Gods Will, thy *Rule to live by*, and not thy own; *Gods glory* thy end, and not thine own carnal intereſt; *Gods love* thy *Principle*; If thy *Rules*, *Aims*, and *Principles* be godly, all the Promiſes of this Life, and of the Life to come, belong to thee. It is worth the obſerving, that all the Promiſes of Life and Salvation are *conditional*: *Happineſs* is intailed upon *Holineſs*, *Glory* upon *Grace*. You ſhall read in Scripture of the *bleſſings* of the *Covenant*, and of the *bond* of the *Covenant*; of the *bleſſings* of the *Promiſe*, and of the *condition* of the *Promiſes*. If ever you would aſſure your ſelves of your intereſt in the *bleſſings of the Covenant*, you muſt try your ſelves by your ſincere performance of the *condition*. Thus Chriſt is promiſed to none but ſuch as believe; pardon of ſin, to none but ſuch as repent; and Heaven to none but ſuch as perſevere in well doing. Tell me then, Canſt thou ſay, as in Gods preſence, that thou haſt

Ezek. 20. 37.

haſt reſpect to all Gods Commandments, (though thou faileſt in all, yet thou haſt a reſpect to all) that thou obeyeſt God *in deed*, and *in truth*, and that thou ſincerely laboureſt to be godly? This is a certain ſign, that all the *Promiſes are thy portion*; but you that are ungodly, and do not thorowly amend your ways, you that ſlight, undervalue, and deſpiſe the *commanding Word*, you have no part, no portion in the *promiſing Word*.

But it may be a diſtreſſed Chriſtian (though without juſt cauſe) will ſay, that he is afraid that he doth not ſincerely obey the *commanding Word*, and therefore dares not apply to himſelf the *promiſing Word*; wherefore I add,

Rule 2.

The ſecond Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

2. *The more thou art afraid, leſt thou ſhouldeſt have no right to the Promiſes, the more right thou haſt (in all probability) to them.* This I ſpeak only to the diſtreſſed Chriſtian, not that I commend his fear: But this I ſay, This fear which thou art poſſeſſed withal, is a probable ſign that thou haſt an intereſt in the Promiſes.

Promiſes. For a *preſumptuous ſinner* never doubts of his right to them, but takes it as a maxim not to be denied, that they belong to him. It is a comfortable ſaying of Mr. *Greenham's*, *When thou hearest the Promiſes, and art in a cold ſweat, and haſt a fear and a trembling ſeizing upon thee, leſt they ſhould not belong to thee; doubt not, but that they do belong to thee*; For Chriſt hath ſaid, *Come unto me all ye that are weary, and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* Mat. 11. 28. And the Prophet *Iſaiah* calls upon thoſe who are of a fearful heart, *to be ſtrong, and fear not*; and tells us for our comfort, that God will look with an eye of favour *upon him that is poor, and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at his Word.* Iſa. 35. 4. Iſa. 66. 2.

Rule 3.

3. *The more ſenſible thou art of thine own unworthineſs to lay hold upon the Promiſes, the more thou art fitted and qualified to lay hold upon them.* For the Promiſes are (as I have ſhewed) the fruit of *Free-grace*. Nothing moved God to enter into Covenant with his people, and thereby

The third Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

to

Sola misericordia deducit Deum ad homines, & sola misericordia reducit homines ad Deum.

to *become their Debtor*, but his *free love*. *Free Grace brought Christ down from Heaven, and it is Free Grace must carry us up to Heaven.* Christ himself is called, *the gift of God*, John 4. 10. *Moses* tells the Israelites, Deut. 7. 7, 8. *The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor chuse you, because you were more in number than any people*, &c. *but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the Oath which he had sworn unto your Fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you?* &c. God doth not love us, because we are *worthy of his love*, but because he loves us, therefore he *makes us worthy.* We must not *bring worthiness to Christ*, but *fetch worthiness from Christ.* And therefore, if thou beest sensible of thine own nothingness, emptiness, and unworthiness, lay hold upon that excellent promise, *Blessed are the*

Mat. 5. 3. *poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Blessed are those who are sensible of their spiritual want, for to them belongs the Kingdom of Heaven, as certainly as if they were already in it.

Rule

Rule 4

4. Study thy Intereſt in the *main and fundamental Promiſe*, and that will help thee to make out thy Intereſt in all the other; *The main and fundamental Promiſe*, is the *Promiſe of Chriſt*; For all Promiſes, whether Spiritual or Temporal, are made to us in and through him. God hath Promiſed, *never to leave us, nor forſake us*, and that *all things ſhall work together for our good*; that is, if we be in Chriſt. God hath ſaid, *all things are ours, whether* Paul, *or* Apollos, *whether life or death, whether things preſent, or things to come*; but it is with this Proviſo, if we be *Chriſts*: Whoſoever takes any comfort from any Temporal Promiſe, and is not in Chriſt, doth but delude and cheat himſelf. This then is thy work O Chriſtian; ſtudy thy intereſt in Chriſt, make out that, and make out all. If no Intereſt in *Chriſt*, no Intereſt in the *Promiſes*; If an Intereſt in *Chriſt*, an Intereſt in the *Promiſes*; let this then be thy daily buſineſs to make it out to thy ſoul, that *Chriſt* is thine.

The fourth Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

2 Cor. 1. 20.

1 Cor. 3.

Queſt.

Three things to be ſtudied in order to themaking out of our intereſt in Chriſt.

Queſt. *How ſhall I be able to do this?*

Anſw. For this purpoſe you muſt diligently ſtudy three things.

1. The *Univerſality* of the Promiſe of Chriſt.
2. The *Freeneſs* of it.
3. The *Condition* upon which he is tendred.

First, The univerſality of the Promiſe of Chriſt. Mark 16. 15, 16.

1. *The Univerſality of the Promiſe of Chriſt.* Chriſt Jeſus with all his benefits is promiſed to every one who is willing to lay hold on him, as he is tendred in the Goſpel. The Apoſtles are commanded to go into *all the World, and to Preach the Goſpel to every Creature; he that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved, &c.* If thou haſt a heart to believe, be thy ſins never ſo great, it is for the honour of Jeſus Chriſt, to pardon them. As the Sea covers great Rocks, as well as ſmall, ſo the Mercy of God in Chriſt will pardon great ſins, as well as little. It will coſt Chriſt as little to waſh away the guilt of great ſins, as of ſmall. Chriſt is a great *Phyſician.* And *David* prayeth, *Pardon my Iniquity, for it is great*, Pſalm 25. 11.

Magnus de cælo venit medicus, quia magnus in terra jacebat ægrotus. *Aug.*

11. Though thy ſins be never ſo bloodily circumſtantiated, though never ſo often reiterated, though thou bee'ſt never ſo lothſome, yet if thou canſt believe, *There is a Fountain opened to the houſe of* David, *and to the Inhabitants of* Jeruſalem; *for ſin, and for uncleanneſs*; and therefore let no man exclude himſelf from a right to Chriſt, who is willing to take Chriſt upon Chriſts terms. He that excludes himſelf, offers the greateſt injury imaginable,

Firſt, Unto Jeſus Chriſt, for he makes him a Lyar: Chriſt hath ſaid, *If any man come to me, I will in no wiſe caſt him out*: and he ſaith, Chriſt will caſt me out, although I do come to him. Joh. 6. 37.

Secondly, Unto his own ſoul. For he neceſſitates himſelf unto damnation; for Chriſt hath ſaid expreſly, *He that believeth not, ſhall be damned.*

Obj. *But I am afraid that I am a* Reprobate, *and that God hath excluded me from having any Intereſt in* Chriſt.

Anſw. Who told thee ſo? It is one

one great sign thou art not, because the Devil would perswade thee that thou art. But however, *Secret things belong to God, but those things which are revealed to us, and our children.* God hath kept the *black Book* of *Reprobation secret:* He openeth the *whole Book of Election* to some of his Children, but he keeps his *black Book* unrevealed. It is a sin for any man to think himself a Reprobate (unless he can prove that he hath sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost) for this thought would hinder him from the use of means for his Salvation, and cause him to despair, which is a sin of the first magnitude, and therefore take heed of complementing thy self into Hell by a sinful modesty, in refusing to believe in Christ: Take heed of dallying or delaying in the great work of *laying hold on Christ, upon Christs terms.* Remember, God excludes none from Christ, but such as exclude themselves by unbelief. And remember, *Whosoever believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

2. You

2. You muſt ſtudy the *Freeneſs* of the Promiſe of Chriſt. God promiſeth Jeſus Chriſt freely, *Ho ve ry one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; Come ye, buy, and eat, yea come buy Wine and Milk without money, and without price, &c.* Chriſt is offered in the Goſpel, *ſine pretio, ſine merito ſine motivo, without price, without merit, and without any motive* inducing on our parts. Therefore the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *Whoſoever will, let him take of the Water of life freely.* Let not then thy undeſervedneſs hinder *thee* from laying hold upon Chriſt, as thy portion. Say not, I am not worthy that Chriſt ſhould own me. Chriſt will own thee, not becauſe thou art *Worthy*, but becauſe *he delights in Mercy*, *Mic.* 7 18. Say not, I am not humbled enough, and therefore I dare not lay hold upon Chriſt. For humiliation is not required to make us precious to Chriſt, but to make Chriſt precious to us; and if thou beeſt ſo far humbled, as to be willing to take Chriſt upon Chriſts terms, thou *humbled enough, unto Divine*

Study the freeneſs of the Promiſe of Chriſt.

Rev. 22 17

Iſa. 55. 1

tation though not unto *Divine Satisfaction*. Every ſtung *Iſraelite*, who was inabled to look up to the *Brazen Serpent*, was healed, though he was not ſtung to that proportion that another *Iſraelite* was.

Study the condition upon which Chriſt is Promiſed.

3. You muſt ſtudy the condition upon which Chriſt is promiſed. It is certain, Chriſt is not tendred abſolutely, without any condition. Chriſt is not offered to a proud ſinner, reſolving ſo to continue, or to a drunkard, reſolving to perſevere in his drunkenneſs. Thoſe Texts which declare the *Freeneſs* of the offer of Chriſt, do alſo mention a condition to be performed by thoſe that will have him, *Iſa.* 55. 1. *Rev.* 22. 15. In both places the condition of thirſting is expreſſed: *Let him that is a thirſt come. Ho every one that thirſteth.*

Queſt *Doth not the mentioning of a* condition *take away the freeneſs of the tender of Chriſt.*

Anſw. By no means. The reaſon is, becauſe this very condition is the free gift of God. The Apoſtle ſaith, *Rom.* 4. 16 *Therefore it is of Faith, that it might be by Grace.*

The

The condition of Faith doth not make the offer of Chriſt, not to be of grace; but therefore it is of faith, that it might be of grace; for as Chriſt, ſo alſo faith is *the gift of God*. We do not preach conditions unto Juſtification in a *Papiſh* ſenſe (as if they merited out of congruity the pardon of ſin) or in an *Arminian* ſenſe (as if we could do any thing by our free will (without grace) to diſpoſe our ſelves unto Juſtification) but in a *Scripture* ſenſe we ſay, that all thoſe on whom God intends to beſtow Chriſt freely, he freely openeth their eyes to ſee their undone condition out of Chriſt, he humbles them under the ſenſe of their ſad condition, and out of his free mercy inables them by faith to lay hold upon Chriſt, and to accept of him upon his own terms. Faith is not the *cauſe for which*, but the *cauſe without which* God will not give us Chriſt.

Queſt. *But what is the condition upon which Chriſt is promiſed?*

Anſw. There is (if I may ſo ſpeak) *Conditio præparans, & diſponens*, and *conditio applicans*, the

condition required to the preparing and diſpoſing us for an intereſt in Chriſt, and the *Condition applying Chriſt to us, and bringing him into our poſſeſſion.*

1. The condition required to the *diſpoſing, preparing, and fitting us for an Intereſt in Chriſt.* And this is the ſight of our ſins, the ſenſe of them, and a real willingneſs to part with them. There is no man qualified according to the Goſpel, to reſt upon Chriſt for pardon of his ſins, who is not really willing to part with them. And no man will be willing to part with his ſins (which he naturally loves as himſelf) unleſs he ſee the ſinfulneſs, and curſedneſs of them, and feels in ſome meaſure the ſmart of them. The Woman who had the bloody Iſſue, never thought of coming to Chriſt, till all her money was ſpent in vain among other Phyſitians. The Prodigal Child would never have returned to his Father, had he not ſeen himſelf utterly undone by wandring from him.

2. The *condition applying Chriſt to us,*

us, and bringing him into our poſſeſſion. This is Faith, which therefore is the proper condition of the Goſpel, upon which Chriſt is tendered. Now this Faith, is not a bare receiving, and taking of Chriſt: For there are many who take him, and miſtake him. (There is no man but is willing when he is dying, to take Chriſt, as the men of the old world were willing to go into the Ark when the flood came) But this taking and receiving of Chriſt (if it be right) hath ſix Properties.

Right receiving of Chriſt hath ſix Properties.

1. It is a *receiving of Chriſt* with all his appurtenances, Chriſt and diſgrace, and reproach, and poverty; Chriſt and his Croſs: There are many would be glad of Chriſt, but they will not take up his Croſs. They would take Chriſt down from the Croſs, (as *Joſeph* of *Arimathea* did) *and leave the Croſs behind them.* But he that takes Chaiſt aright, will be as willing to wear a Crown of thorns for his ſake, as a Crown of Gold.

2. It is a *receiving of Chriſt* in all his Offices, as our *King*, *Prieſt*, and *Prophet*. A true Believer is as

willing to receive Chriſt into his ſoul, as he is that Chriſt ſhould receive him into Heaven; he is as willing to have Chriſt Reign over him, as he is to Reign with Chriſt in Heaven. He deſires not only to be *ſaved*, but to be *healed* by *Chriſt*.

3. It is a receiving of *Chriſt into every room* of the Soul; for Chriſt will come into *every room*, or into *never a room*. A true Believer opens every door unto Chriſt; he gives him the Lock and key of the whole man, and deſires that he would come and recide in *every room*.

4. It is a *receiving of Chriſt*, and *him* only. For Chriſt muſt Rule *alone*, or *not at all*. An Hypocrite would compound with Chriſt, and together with the falſe Mother, divide the Child; but a true Believer ſaith with the Prophet, *O Lord our God! Other Lords beſides thee have had dominion over us; but now by thee only will we make mention of thy Name.* And with the true Mother he will give the whole to God.

5. It is a *receiving of Chriſt in health*, as well as in *ſickneſs*; in *proſperity*,

ſperity, as well as in *adverſity*; in *youth*, as well as in *Old age*; in *life*, as well as in *Death* Moſt people make uſe of Chriſt, meerly as a ſhelter againſt a ſtorm, for their own ends (as the *Athenians* did of *Themiſtocles*) and when the ſtorm is over, forſake him: moſt people fly to Chriſt in their diſtreſs, as *Joab* did to the *Horns of the Altar*, and when they can ſerve the Devil no longer, then they begin to think of ſerving of God: But a true Believer will give his beſt days to God, as well as his worſt; he deſires not only to die in Chriſt, but to live for Chriſt, he receives Chriſt in health, *&c.*

6. It is a *receiving of Chriſt*, not only for an *hour*, or a *day*, or a *year*, but *for ever* True Faith marries the ſoul to Chriſt, never to part. Once a Member of Chriſt, for ever a Member.

Now there is no Child of God, of what ſize ſoever (though he be but as a Toe in Chriſts body) who cannot truly ſay, that he is willing to receive Jeſus Chriſt with all theſe Properties, to receive all Chriſt,

with all his appurtenances, and to receive him only in *every room*, in *health*, and *for ever*. And therefore let not the Devil, or thy miſgiving heart, or thy melancholick fancy, keep thee off from believing that Chriſt Jeſus is thy portion, and that thou haſt an intereſt in the *main* and *fundamental Promiſe*, and by that, in all the other. Do to Chriſt as the
2 King 4. 2. *Shunamitiſh* woman did to the Prophet, *lay faſt hold on him*; and ſuffer not the Devil to cauſe thee to let go thy hold. Oh that there might be this day a bleſſed and happy Marriage between Jeſus Chriſt, and every diſtreſſed Chriſtian.

Object. *But ſuppoſe I am willing to take* Chriſt *upon* Chriſts terms, *can I reſt aſſured that* Chriſt *will receive me?*

Joh. 6. 37. *Anſw.* Yes, doubtleſs. For he hath ſaid, he will; and he is truth it ſelf, and cannot lye. Indeed a
Iſa. 55 1. Rev. 22. 5 poor wounded ſinner will ſometimes confeſs that he is willing with all his heart to receive Chriſt upon his own terms; but he is afraid leſt Chriſt ſhould refuſe to receive him.

But

But this is a needleſs fear: For Chriſt will in no wiſe refuſe thoſe that come to him. *To as many as receive him, to all thoſe he will give power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe in his Name* Joh. 1. 12. *He that believeth hath everlaſting life, and ſhall never come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death to life.* Joh. 5. 24. So much for the fourth Rule.

If theſe Rules and Directions already named, will not inable thee to apply the Promiſes, ſo as to keep thee from periſhing in the day of diſtreſs; Let me add,

Rule 5.

The fifth Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

5. *If thou canſt not lay hold upon the Promiſes made to thoſe who are in the higheſt form in Chriſts School, lay hold upon the Promiſes made to thoſe who are in the lower forms.* In Chriſts School there are divers ſorts of Scholars, ſome are in the high form, ſome in the middle, ſome in the loweſt, ſome are Babes in Chriſts School, ſome are grown Chriſtians, ſome are as tall Cedars, ſome are as low ſhrubs. Now you muſt know that it is our duty to labour to be of the higheſt form. He

that ſaith he hath *grace enough*, hath *grace little enough*. He that ſtints himſelf in his indeavours after grace, never had true Grace. We muſt labour to be *perfect, as God is perfect*. But yet you muſt alſo know, that he that is a *real Scholar* in *Chriſts School*, is in an happy condition, though he be not the beſt *Scholar*. And that it is our duty ſo to eye the *eminent graces*, which are in others, as to be thereby incited to a *further progreſs* in grace, but not ſo as to be thereby *diſheartned* and *diſcouraged*. There are many *diſtreſſed Chriſtians* like to theſe who gaze ſo long upon the *brightneſs of the Sun*, that when they come into their houſes, they cannot ſee at all, they pore ſo much upon the *tranſcendent Excellencies* which are in their Brethren, that they are ſtark blind in their own concernments, and cannot ſee any grace in themſelves, and hereupon, are apt to conclude, that they are out of Gods favour. But this is a *non-ſequitur*. The Foot muſt not ſay, that it is no part of the body, becauſe it is not ſo eminent a part as the Head,

Qui dixit ſufficit, deficit. Non progredi, eſt regredi.

Head or Heart. We muſt rather ſay with the Martyr, *Bleſſed be God that I am a member in Chriſts body, though but the weakeſt and loweſt.* We muſt not reſt ſatisfied with being *low Chriſtians*; but yet we muſt not therefore ſay, *We are no Chriſtians.* And when we are under great tribulations and temptations, if we cannot apply to our ſelves for our comfort thoſe Promiſes which are made to eminent Saints of the higheſt form, let us apply thoſe which are made unto true Saints, though to ſuch who are the loweſt of the loweſt form: and hereby we ſhall (through Gods bleſſing) find our ſouls marvellouſly *ſupported* and *comforted.* As for example, Chriſt hath ſaid, *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* And therefore though thou art not *rich in Grace*, yet if *poor in ſpirit*, thou art bleſſed. Chriſt ſaith, *Bleſſed are they that mourn for they ſhall be comforted.* Though thou canſt not live without ſin, yet if a mourner for thine own, and other mens ſins, thou art bleſſed.

Mat. 5. 3.

Mat. 5. 4.

Chriſt

Mat. 5. 6. Christ saith, *blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after Righteousness*, &c. Though thou findest an exceeding great want of Righteousness in thee, yet if thou hungrest and thirstest after it, thou art blessed.

Mat. 11. 28. Christ saith, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* This Text is an Alabaster box full of precious consolation. If thy sins be a burden to thee, Christ will give thee rest; if thou carriest them about thee, not as a Golden Chain about thy neck, but as an Iron Chain about thy feet; if thou beest heavyladen with them, Christ will take them off thy shoulders, and put them upon his.

Mat. 12. 20. Christ saith, *That he will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoaking flax, till he send forth judgment unto victory.* If thou hast grace but as a *smoaking flax*, Christ will not quench it, but assist it, till it come to a great flame.

Mat. 9. 12. 13. Christ saith, *That the whole have no need of the Physitian, but they that are sick. And that he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.*

If

If thou art a ſin-ſick-ſinner, thy name is in Chriſts commiſſion, he came to ſave thee.

Chriſt ſaith, *The Son of man is come to ſave that which was loſt.* If thou apprehendeſt thy ſelf to be in a loſt condition, thou art amongſt the number of thoſe whom Chriſt came to ſave. Mat. 18. 11.

The Apoſtle ſaith, *There is no condemnation to thoſe who are in Chriſt, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.* Though thou haſt much fleſh in thee, and art ſometimes overtaken with ſin, yet if thou doſt not walk after the fleſh, as a ſervant after his Maſter, if thou walkeſt after the Spirit, there is no condemnation to thee. Rom. 8. 1.

The Apoſtle ſaith, *If we confeſs our ſins, God is faithful to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs.* If we confeſs our ſins, out of a deteſtation of ſin, with bleeding hearts, and a ſincere purpoſe of forſaking them, God is bound by vertue of his Promiſe to forgive us, elſe he were unfaithful. 1 Joh. 1. 9.

The Apoſtle ſaith, *That he that* Phil. 1. 6.

hath

hath begun a good work in us, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: And therefore if thou hast truth of grace, though but as a grain of Mustard-seed, do not doubt, but that God in the diligent use of means will inable thee to persevere.

I might add *Neh* 1. 11. where God promiseth to be *attentive to the prayers of those who desire to fear his Name.* And *Isa.* 26. 11. *Isa* 26 3. *Isa.* 65. 1. *Isa.* 55. 1. *Revel.* 22. 15. *John* 6. 37. But I forbear.

Rule 6.

The sixth Rule for the Right Application of the Promises.

If thou canst not apply to thy self for thy comfort in affliction, the *conditional Promises*, lay hold on the *absolute Promises.* I have formerly told you, that there are some Promises *conditional*, others *absolute*; some to *grace*, others of *grace*, some to those that are *godly*, others to *make us godly*: God hath not only promised to *pardon* those that repent, but to give repentance; not only to justifie those that believe, but to give us to believe; not only to give Heaven to those that love him, but to give us grace to love.

Act 5 31. Phil. 1 29 Deut. 30 6. Jer. 32. 40

love him; not only to ſave thoſe that perſevere, but to enable us to perſevere: And therefore if thou canſt not lay hold upon the Promiſes to thoſe that *are godly*, apply thoſe which are made to make us *godly*. If not thoſe which are made to thoſe who *repent*, *believe* and *perſevere*, apply thoſe wherein God promiſeth *to give us to repent*, *believe*, and *perſevere*. If not the conditional, lay hold upon the abſolute.

There are theſe *differences* and *agreements*, between conditional and abſolute Promiſes.

1. For Conditional Promiſes.

1. All Promiſes of *life and ſalvation are Conditional.*

2. *Conditional Promiſes* are the *fruit of Free-grace*, as well as *Abſolute*. It is *Free-grace* which inableth us to perform the *Conditional*, and *Free-grace* which moved God to promiſe ſuch great mercies upon ſuch Conditions.

3. They are the fruit of *Rich-grace*, and *Rare-mercy*, as well as *Abſolute Promiſes.*

4. They are of great uſe to *quicken*

a lazy Christian, and to *incourage him to diligence*; for no man can obtain the *blessing promised* but he that performs the *condition injoyned*.

5. They are *rare Touchstones* to try our interest in the Promises; For he that neglects to perform the *condition*, cannot challenge an interest in the *blessing promised* upon the performing of it.

2. For Absolute Promises.

1. Though Promises to *grace* be conditional, yet Promises of *grace* are absolute, and are made by God unto Christ in the behalf of his elect Children, according to that of *David Ask of me, and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession*.

2. There are no Promises so Absolute, as to exclude all Endeavours on our part. God will do the things promised *for us*, but *by us*. We work; but it is *God who worketh all our works in us, and for us*.

3. Absolute Promises are *founda-* *of industry*, as well as conditi- The truth of this I made out in another Sermon. 4. Ab-

4. Abſolute Promiſes are *demonſtrative arguments of ſpecial election*, and of the *perſeverance* of the Saints. There are ſome peculiar ones to whom God hath Promiſed (in the uſe of means) abſolutely to *write his Law in their hearts, to cauſe them to walk in his ways*, to give them *infallibly*, and *infruſtrably*, repentance, faith, and perſeverance. The promiſe of the firſt grace, and of the crowning grace is abſolute. And therefore the Doctrine of *Special Election*, and of *Perſeverance*, muſt needs be true.

5. Abſolute Promiſes are *mighty helps to wounded Conſciences*, and *rare cordials for fainting and deſpairing Chriſtians*. When thou art in the dark, and ſeeſt no light, fly from the *conditional Promiſes*, to the *abſolute*; ſay, Lord, thou haſt not only promiſed to give pardon to thoſe who *repent*, but thou haſt exalted Chriſt for to give *Repentance*: Thou haſt not only promiſed to juſtifie thoſe who *believe*, but to give grace to *believe*. Lord fulfill thine own Promiſe unto thy ſervant, *&c.*

Object.

Object. *All my fear is that these absolute Promises do not belong to me.*

Answ. Take heed of making *desperate conclusions against thy self.* Say as the King of *Nineveh*, *Who knoweth but God may turn and have mercy?* Exclude not thy self; Neither man nor Angel can say, *thou art Excluded.* No man ought to believe himself to be a Reprobate (as I have shewed); these Promises belong to all that can lay hold on them as they are tendred. As the Brazen Serpent belonged to all those who were able to look upon it; so do these Promises to all that can by Faith look up, that they may be healed. Say as the four Leapers in another case, If I go on
2 Kings 7. in unbelief, I am certainly damned, And therefore I will venture upon Christ, I will fly to this Ark, and if I perish I will perish believing.

If these directions will not suffice to comfort thee in the day of adversity, let me add,

The seventh Rule for the right Application of the Promises.

Rule 7.

All *Promises* made in *Scripture* to the *Saints in general*, are applicable to

to *every Saint in particular*. God promiſeth to *Solomon*, 1 Kings 8. 37, 40. And *Jehoſhaphat* applied this to his own particular condition 2 *Chron.* 20. 9. God promiſeth to the *Saints in general*, that he will *give them Grace and Glory*, that he will *with-hold no good thing from them*, that they ſhall *want nothing that is good*, and that *all outward bleſſings ſhall be added to them*. Now there is no Saint but he may as juſtly lay hold upon thoſe Promiſes, as if his name were named in them: And the reaſon is, becauſe all the Promiſes do meet in Chriſt, as all Lines in a Center. And every Saint hath all Chriſt. And therefore Promiſes made to thoſe that are in Chriſt, belong to all that are in Chriſt.

Pſ. 48. 10. Pſ. 43. 10. Mat. 6. 33.

Rule 8.

The eight Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

All Promiſes made to *Particular Saints* are *applicable* to all *Saints* in the *ſame condition*. God promiſeth by *Joſhua*, that he *would never leave him, nor forſake him*. This is applied by the Apoſtle for the comfort of every Saint. Chriſt tells *Peter*, Luke 22. 32. *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith*

Joſh. 5. Heb. 13. 5.

faith fail not. This is applicable to every Saint: Chriſt prayeth for thee and me, and therefore he adds, *When thou art converted ſtrengthen thy Brethren.* Therefore the Apoſtle *Paul*
2 Cor. 1. 4 ſaith, *That God comforted him in his tribulation, that he might be able to comfort thoſe who are in trouble by the comfort wherewith he was comforted.* And the Apoſtle *James* propounds
James 5. 10, 11. the example of the *Prophets* in general, and of *Job* in particular, to perſwade unto patience in affliction. And therefore when thou art in any ſtrait, conſider what God hath promiſed unto others, in thy condition, and what God hath done to them, he will do to thee, for he is unchangable. And ſay not, If I were a *Paul*, a *Peter*, or a *Job*, God would do to me, as he did to them; but I am a poor, weak, unworthy creature, not worthy to be named that day which theſe are named. But conſider, If thou beeſt a member of Chriſts body (though but as the Toe) Chriſt will have a care of thee. If a child of God (though but weak and ſickly) thy Heavenly Father will provide

vide for thee. A Father is tender of every Child, and a man of every member of his body; ſo will God be of all thoſe who belong to him, though but Babes in Chriſt.

Rule 9.

The 9th. Rule for the Right Application of the Promiſes.

The Promiſes of the Goſpel are all *concatenated*. If thou haſt a true *right* to any one Promiſe to which Heaven is annexed, thou haſt a right to all the other. As the *Commandments of God are chained together* (he that breaks one, breaks all; and he that ſincerely labours to keep one, will labour to keep all, according to that Rule, *Whatſoever is done for God, is done equally*.) And as the Graces of God are linked together and therefore Heaven is ſometimes promiſed to our grace, becauſe he that hath one ſaving grace, hath all) ſo alſo are the Promiſes joyned together, he that hath a right to one, hath a right to all: For they are all but *one and the ſame for ſubſtance*. They are all the *fruit of the ſame free love in God*; They are all *the branches of the ſame Covenant of Grace*. (And therefore if thou haſt a right

Quicquid propter Deum fit, æqualiter fit. Mat. 5. 3, 8

to

to the Covenant, thou haſt a right to all the Promiſes) they all carry us to Chriſt, and meet in Chriſt and are in him *Yea* and in him *Amen*; And therefore if thou haſt a right to Chriſt, thou haſt a right to all.

This is a point of *ſingular comfort in the worſt of days and dangers.* For ſometimes a child of God under great afflictions, can lay hold upon one Promiſe, and not upon another, and ſome can apply thoſe which others cannot, and others thoſe which they cannot: Let all ſuch know for their great comfort, That he that hath right to one *branch of the Covenant, hath right to all.* He that hath let fall a Chain of Gold, conſiſting of divers links into the water, if he can catch hold upon any one of the links, he will eaſily get out the *whole chain.* The Promiſes are like to a Golden chain with divers links, lay hold upon one aright, and this will aſſure thee of thy intereſt in all the reſt.

I have known many (yea, very many who have died with a great deal of comfort from the Applica-

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tion of that one Text, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. unto their own condition, *We know that we have paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we love the Brethren.* When all other evidences failed them, and all other Texts of Scripture afforded them no comfort, here they anchored, here they found reſt for their ſouls; They bleſſed God that they could ſay, that they *loved the Brethren*, and loved them, *not for any outward reſpects*, but becauſe of the *Image of God in them*, and they loved them when poor, as well as when rich; and the more they had of God, the more they loved them; and they loved them even when they were reproved by them of their faults. And upon this one Planck they ſwam ſafely and comfortably unto the *Haven of eternal Happineſs.*

Rule 10.

If thy *condition* be ſo ſad, and thy *melancholy* ſo *exceſſive*, that thou canſt not lay hold upon any promiſe, yet notwithſtanding look towards it: Say as *Jonah* when he was in the Whales belly, *Jonah* 2. 4. *Then I ſaid, I am caſt out of thy ſight,*

The tenth Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

ſight, yet I will look again towards thy holy Temple. The Temple was a type of Chriſt. Though thou canſt not apply Chriſt to thy ſoul for thy comfort, yet look towards him; and if thou canſt not come to him, he will come to thee: if thou canſt not apprehend him, he will apprehend thee; As the *Load-ſtone* will draw the *Iron*, though the *Iron* cannot
Pſa. 3.12. draw the *Loadſtone*; ſo will Chriſt (thy heavenly *Loadſtone*) draw thee to the *Promiſe*, though thou canſt not draw
Joh. 6.44. thy ſelf to it. *No man can come to me* (ſaith Chriſt) *except the Father draw him:* Pray therefore with the *Church*, Cant. 1.4. *Draw me, and we will run after thee.*

Rule 11.

The eleventh Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

Pray unto God to give thee *Spiritual eyes* to behold thy *intereſt* in the *Promiſes?* For as it is God who makes them, ſo it is only he who can *irradiate* them, and open thy eyes to ſee thy right in them. It is with Promiſes (as I have ſaid) as with Chapters and Sermons. A man may read a Chapter, and hear a Sermon, and taſte no ſweetneſs in them

them at one time, and at another time taſte much ſweetneſs in them, as God is pleaſed to co-operate with the Reading of the one, and Hearing of the other. So it is with the Promiſes; and therefore pray unto God *to lighten thine eyes, that thou ſleep not the ſleep of death.* Pray unto Chriſt *to anoint thine eyes with his Spiritual eye-ſalve.* And to cauſe thee to hope in his word of promiſe; according to that excellent prayer of *David, Remember the Word unto thy Servant, upon which thou haſt cauſed me to hope.* It is God muſt cauſe us to hope and truſt in his Promiſes, or elſe we ſhall never be able. God hath given thee eyes to ſee thy miſery; O pray for eyes to ſee his mercy. The Church of *Laodicea* wanted eyes to ſee her miſery; *She was miſerable, and naked, and knew it not.* Thou haſt eyes to ſee thy undone condition out of Chriſt; pray for eyes to behold the riches of mercy that are in Chriſt, and his willingneſs to receive all that come to him.

Pſal. 13. 3.

Rev. 3. 18.

Pſal. 49.

Rev. 3. 16.

Rule 12.

The 12th Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes

Pray unto God, not only to give thee

thee *Spiritual eyes*, to ſee thy intereſt in the promiſes, but a *Spiritual hand*, to inable thee to apply them to thine own ſoul in particular. By this Spiritual Hand, I mean, *A Chriſt-appropriating Faith.* Juſtifying Faith is (as it were) the *hand of the ſoul*, by which we *appropriate Chriſt*, and all the Promiſes, as belonging to us in particular. Now *Faith is*

Epheſ. 2. 8. *the gift of God.* Pray for *the Spirit of Faith.* And for your incouragement, conſider, that the Spirit is called,

Act. 1. 4. Eph. 1. 13. *The Promiſe of the Father, and that holy Spirit of Promiſe:* And God hath promiſed to give the Spirit to thoſe

Luk. 11. 13. who ask for it; *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more ſhall your Heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?* The office of the holy Spirit is firſt to *ſeal grace*, and then to *ſeal to grace:* Firſt, the Spirit

Eph. 1. 14 *ſanctifieth* us; then it *witneſſeth* to our *ſpirits*, that we are *ſanctified.* Pray therefore unto God that he would not only work grace in you, but *witneſs unto the Grace* which he hath wrought. Pray for the *ſanctifying* and *ſealing* work of the Spirit.

That

That he would not only fit you to have an *intereſt* in the Promiſes, but aſſure you of your *intereſt in them.*

Rule 13.

The 13. Rule for the right Application of the Promiſes.

Study thy intereſt in the Promiſes in the time of *health*, and *outward proſperity*; For I find by experience, that a child of God (*under outward affliction*, or *divine deſertion*, or *extream melancholy*) is many times like a man in the dark. A man in the dark cannot (though never ſo learned) read in a book of the cleareſt print, or faireſt characters; he cannot (though never ſo active) undertake any thing of weight. No more can a child of God in the *hour of diſtreſs*, read his Evidences for Heaven, much leſs ſtudy to find out Evidences; he looks upon all the Promiſes *with a black pair of ſpectacles*, and wants light to ſee his intereſt in them. When *Zion* was in diſtreſs, ſhe ſaid, *God had forſaken her, and her Lord had forgotten her.* Iſa. 49 14 When *David* was perſecuted by *Saul*, he ſaid in his haſte, *All men were lyars*, even *Samuel* himſelf, who had told him Pſ. 116. 11

that God would beſtow the King-
Pſ 31.22. dom on him: He ſaid *in his haſte,*
Pſ.88.13. *he was cut off from before Gods eyes.*
14,15,16, Thus did *Heman.* Chriſt himſelf
17, 18. cried out, when he was upon the Croſs, with a loud voice, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* As men in Agues and Feavers, are not fit judges of meats and drinks (whether they be good or bad) becauſe their pallats are out of taſte. So a *diſtreſſed Chriſtian* (when under *extream melancholy*, *divine deſertions*, or ſome *great affliction*) is no fit Judg, at ſuch a time of his intereſt in the Promiſes. And therefore my advice is, *Make out thy intereſt in time of proſperity, and live upon it in time of adverſity. Make, and read over thy Evidences for Heaven in time of Health, and learn them by heart, that when thou comeſt into a dark condition, thou mayeſt neither have them to make, or to read.* Do as *Tamar* did, *Gen.* 38. 18, 25. When *Judah* her Father-in-law, lay with her, ſhe took as a pledg, his *ſignet*, *bracelets*, and *ſtaff.* And afterward when ſhe was in great diſtreſs, and ready to be burnt as a Harlot, ſhe then brought her

ſtaff

ſtaff and *ſignet*, and *bracelets*, and ſaid, *By the man whoſe theſe are, am I with Child*; and thereby ſhe ſaved her life. So muſt you do. In time of health, ſtudy thy intereſt in the Promiſes; and in time of ſickneſs, live upon what thou haſt ſtudied; then bring forth thy *ſtaff* and *bracelets*, &c. then produce thy Evidences, and make uſe of them, as ſpiritual Buttereſſes to keep thee from falling into deſpair.

I knew a very Godly Woman (not unknown to many here) who in her life-time had taken a great deal of pains to compoſe and write down her Evidences for Heaven, and who alſo kept a *Diary* of her life, and wrote down how ſhe ſpent every Day; when ſhe lay upon her Death-bed, it pleaſed God to with-draw himſelf from her, for a while, and to let the Devil looſe, who tempted her to deſpair, told her ſhe was an *Hypocrite*, a *Formaliſt*, and that ſhe had no true grace in her. She ſent for me, made her bitter complaint to me, and ſadly bewailed her condition: Then ſhe told me (which before I knew

Mrs. *Digons* dwelling with Mrs. *Alcot* in *Aldermanbury*.

not) how ſhe had ſpent her life, how careful ſhe had been in *ſearching her ways*, in obſerving how ſhe ſpent every day, and how exact in collecting *Evidences for Heaven:* the Book was ſent for, I read a great part of it to her, and took much delight and content in what I read. And it pleaſed God to come to her with comfort in the reading of it. She ſhewed her *Staff*, and her *Bracelets*, and thereby quenched the fiery darts of the Devil.

Thus I have in three Sermons taught you how to make uſe of *Scripture-Promiſes*, as *Conduits* of *Soul-ſupportation*, and *Soul-conſolation* in the day of diſtreſs. When you hereafter read the *Bible*, remember the Promiſing-word (as well as the Commanding and Threatning word) make a *Catalogue* of the Promiſes, meditate upon the *preciouſneſs*, *freeneſs*, *uſefulneſs*, *latitude*, *richneſs*, and *immutability* of them. They are as certain as God himſelf; they have the ſtrength of God, the comforts of God, and aſſiſtance of God in them Above all, labour to make Application

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tion of them to your own Soul. For this purpoſe, ſtudy theſe thirteen Rules and Directions. Pray unto God to give thee *ſpiritual Eyes*, to ſee thy Intereſt in them, and *ſpiritual Hands* to reach out after them. Pray to God to give thee *ſpiritual ability*, to act faith upon the Promiſes, to draw vertue from them, as the Woman who had the bloody Iſſue, did from Chriſt; to ſuck out all the ſweetneſs that is in them, to hang upon them, as the Woman did upon the Prophet, and as the Bee doth upon a flower; and by application of them to thy ſoul, to live in God, and on God here, till thou comeſt to enjoy the bleſſings promiſed with God for ever in Heaven.

There is one Objection behind, which when I have anſwered, I have done. For a diſtreſſed Chriſtian will object, and ſay:

1 Object. *Though the Promiſes are* rare Cordials, *and ſhall all of them be certainly fulfilled, yet God is oftentimes long before he fulfills them; and while God is fulfilling of his Promiſes, I may in the mean time periſh in my afflictions.*

Gen 3.15. Luk. 18 7, 8. *Answ.* It cannot be denied, but that God is oftentimes very long in fulfilling his Promises. He promised that the *Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpents head*; but it was four thousand years before that Promise was actually accomplished. He promiseth to *avenge his Elect of all their Enemies*, *to do it speedily.*

Rev. 6. 10 And the souls under the Altar cry, *How long Lord, when wilt thou avenge our Blood?* &c. But this is not yet fulfilled.

Nay, I must add, That God is not only a long time *performing* his Promises, but sometimes instead of performing them, he seems to the eye of flesh and blood to walk contrary to them. *Sometimes the Providences of God run cross to his Promises.* God promised to make *David* King; instead of this, he is persecuted by *Saul*, as a *Partridge upon the Mountains*; he is driven to that extremity, that he begins to doubt of Gods Promise, and to say, *That one day he should die by the hand of Saul.* God promised to

1 Sam. 27. 1. *Joseph, That the Sun, Moon, and Stars should worship him*, and that his *sheaf should*

ſhould be lifted up above the ſheaf of his Brethren. But he finds the quite contrary, his Brethren ſeek to *ſlay him*, ſell him into *Ægypt*, and there he is put in Priſon as one quite forſaken of God. But yet notwithſtanding all this, you muſt know, That though the way of God, in performing his Promiſes, be very myſterious and ſecret, yet he will at laſt perform every ἰωτὰ, and tittle of them. Thus *David* was at laſt made King of *Iſrael*, and *Joſeph* Lord of *Ægypt*, and his Brethren came all to worſhip him.

Queſt. *How muſt we carry and behave our ſelves at ſuch times, when* Providences *ſeem to run croſs unto Gods Promiſes?*

Anſ. At ſuch times there are three things required of us.

1. It is our duty to wait *patiently* and *believingly*, till *Providences* and *Promiſes* meet together. *He that believeth, maketh not haſte.* The Propher there ſpeaks of a glorious Promiſe, and adds, That a true Saint will wait Gods time, which is the fitteſt and beſt time; he will

Three duties to be practiſed when Providences run croſs to Promiſes.

Iſa. 28 16.

patiently expect till God fulfill his Promiſe: He will do as the Martyr did, who might have eſcaped privately out of Priſon, and was tempted to it by his friends, but anſwered, *He would not go out of Priſon when his enemies would have him, for they would make him tarry longer than he ſhould, nor yet when his friends would have him, for they would make him tarry a leſſer time than he ſhould; but he would come out when God would have him.* Gods time is the beſt; and they are ſoon enough delivered, who are delivered in Gods way, and at Gods time. This then is thy great duty (O Chriſtian) to wait patiently, and believingly, and not to ſeek by unlawful ways to be rid of thy miſeries, as *David* did by going to the *Philiſtims*; and as many in Queen *Maries* days did, by yielding to the Popiſh ſuperſtitions. To help you to wait Gods leiſure, holding Faith and a good Conſcience; you have

1 Sam. 27. 1.

1. Many rare and precious Promiſes made to thoſe that wait upon him; which I have formerly named.

2. You

2. You have four Attributes in God to ſupport you, his *Faithfulneſs*, *Almightineſs*, *infinite Goodneſs* and *Wiſdom*. He is *Faithful*, and not one tittle of his Word ſhall fall to the ground: He is *Almighty*, and able to do whatſoever he hath Promiſed; He is *infinitely Wiſe*, to know the beſt time and ſeaſon, and *infinitely Good* and *Loving* to his Children, and doth not willingly afflict them, but will make haſte to help them. Lam. 3. 33

2. It is our duty to live upon *Promiſes*, while *Providences* ſeem to run croſs to *Promiſes*. This is the meaning of *Hab.* 2. 4. *The juſt ſhall live by Faith*. They ſhall *live by Faith*, when they have nothing elſe to live on. When ſenſe and reaſon tell them, they are undone, then ſhall they *live by faith* in the Promiſes, and not only live patiently, but comfortably, and joyfully; as the ſame Prophet ſaith, *Hab.* 3. 17, 18, 19. *Although the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſome, neither ſhall fruit be in the Vine, and the field ſhall yield no meat, &c. yet I will rejoyce in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my Salvation.*

This

Act. 27. 20,23,24. This life did *Paul* live, when the Ship in which he was, was ready to be drowned, when there was neither Sun-light, nor Star-light, yet he was exceedingly chearful, because God had promised to preserve him, and those with him. By living this life, *God is much honoured*, and our souls much quieted and refreshed.

3. It is our duty to *continue praying till Providences and Promises meet together*: For it is Prayer, and Prayer only, which will at last reconcile Gods Promises, and Gods Dispensations, and cause them to meet and to kiss one another: For as the Promises are the ground and rule of our Prayers; so our Prayers are the divine ways and means for the obtaining of the Promises. I say as the Promises are,

1. The ground of our Prayers. For we cannot pray in Faith, unless we have some Promise to bottom our Prayers upon; therefore *David* often chargeth God in his Prayers with his Promise. He harps eight times upon the same string in one Psalm, to teach us, that the great-

Psal. 119. 28,38,41 65, 76, 107,142, 149.

est

teſt *Rhetorick and Oratory we can uſe in our Prayers, is to urge God with his Promiſe.*

2. They are not only the ground, but the rule of our Prayers: As we muſt pray for nothing but what God hath Promiſed, ſo we muſt regulate our Prayers according to Gods Promiſes. Thoſe things which he hath abſolutely promiſed, we muſt pray for abſolutely; and where God hath put Conditions and Exceptions, there our Prayers muſt be Conditional.

Now as the Promiſes are the ground and rule of our Prayers, ſo our Prayers are divine means and helps for the obtaining of the Promiſes: Though God hath made many glorious and precious Promiſes to his Children, yet he will perform none of them, but to thoſe who by Prayer ſeek them at his hands. When *Nathan* told *David* what great things God had promiſed to him, he went into Gods houſe to pray for them, 2 *Sam.* 7. The Prophet *Iſaiah* mentioneth a glorious promiſe, *Iſa.* 43. 25. but he adds, *Put me in remembrance*, verſe

verſe 20. Thus *Ezek.* 36. 37. *I will yet for this be inquired of by the houſe of Iſrael*; and therefore when you read the Promiſes of the Bible, remember whenſoever God makes a Promiſe, you muſt make a Prayer, and that Prayer will haſten the fulfilling of the Promiſes: You muſt continue to pray, and faint not: For
Hab. 3. 2. the *viſion is but for an appointed time*; *though it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry.* This did *Daniel*, when he underſtood the time approached, *&c.* he prayed, *Dan.* 9. 2, 3. Thus did *David*, Pſal. 56. 9. and 57. 1, 2. Thus muſt you do. Theſe are the three great duties which the Lord requires of us at all times, but more eſpecially in theſe our days, wherein the *Providences* of God ſeem to run quite croſs unto his *Promiſes.* The Lord give us grace to practiſe them. So much for this Text.

The end of the fifth Sermon.

A brief Repetition of what was ſaid of Mrs. *Elizabeth Moor*, at her Burial.

THough I have finiſhed my Text, yet I have another Text remaining, of which I muſt ſpeak a few words, and that is, The party deceaſed, at whoſe Funeral we are here met.

She was a Woman (I verily believe) truly *fearing God*, and yet throughout her whole life loaded with many and great troubles. God picked her out to be a *pattern* of afflictions, as he had not long before, that Reverend and Godly Miniſter, Mr. *Jeremiah Whitaker*.

This *Pattern* teacheth us three Leſſons.

1. *That all things come alike to all in this world, and that no man knoweth love or hatred by any thing that is before him.* The beſt of Saints ſometimes are upon the Dung-hill, when the

the vileſt of men are upon the Throne. The beſt of men are afflicted, when the worſt of men are in proſperity.

2. That there is not ſo much *evil* in *Affliction*, or ſo much *good* in *Proſperity*, as the *World imagineth*; For if there were, God would not beſtow ſo much Proſperity upon the wicked, and exerciſe his dear Children with ſo many Afflictions.

3. That there will come a rewarding-day, in which it ſhall certainly be well with the *Righteous*. When I ſee a wicked man proſper, I ſay, Surely there will come a *puniſhing-day*, in which the wicked ſhall be turned into Hell. When I ſee a Godly man in adverſity, I ſay, Pſal. 98. *Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.* Such examples prove that there is another life beſides this. And that if the *Godly had hope only in this life, they were of all people moſt miſerable.*

I will not trouble you with a relation of [illegible] Chriſtian carriage, in the time of her health, becauſe it

is

is ſufficiently known to moſt here preſent. I ſhall only take notice of her great care and diligence in making her *Calling* and *Election ſure*. She had not her Ark to build when the Flood came, nor her Corn to get when the ſeven years of Famine came: She had laid up a ſtock of graces and comforts againſt the evil hour; She had not her *Evidences for Heaven* to get, at the hour of death. But ſhe had collected and compoſed them in the time of her life; and when ſhe came to die, ſhe had neither her *Graces*, nor her *Comforts*, nor her *Evidences for Heaven* to ſeek; ſhe had nothing to do but to die.

Her ſickneſs was very long, and very painful; concerning which I ſhall briefly acquaint you with theſe few particulars.

1: God moved the hearts of very many Godly people, to take compaſſion of her ſad and afflicted condition, and to contribute liberally (ſhe being poor) towards her relief, this merciful Providence wonderfully comforted her: She ſaw Gods love in it, and was ſo much affected

cted with it, that ſhe was (for a little while) really and exceedingly afraid) notwithſtanding her great torments by reaſon of a Cancer in her breaſt) leſt ſhe ſhould have her Heaven in this life, and leſt this mercy ſhould be all her portion. The Lord recompence that labour of love, and that Chriſtian charity a thouſand-fold into the boſomes of thoſe who manifeſted ſo much kindneſs to her.

2. Her Patience was very great: As God increaſed her pains, he increaſed her Patience, even to the admiration of ſuch of us as were frequent ſpectators of it. She was brought to ſuch a ſweet frame of ſpirit, as to be *willing to live under all her torments, as long as God pleaſed, and to die whenſoever he pleaſed.*

3. She was a Woman of a very fearful nature, and in the time of her health had many doubts and ſcruples (notwithſtanding all her care forementioned) about her ſalvation. But in her ſickneſs, all her doubts vaniſhed. God chained up Satan. The Devil had no power to tempt

tempt her; ſhe felt a great calmneſs to her ſoul, and had much inward peace; and enjoyed more of God, and his conſolations, in the time of her ſickneſs, than in the time of her health.

4. She was very forward in ſpreading and diffuſing thoſe graces which God had beſtowed upon her, and in giving good counſel to thoſe who viſited her. I have heard her often, and often, perſwading her friends to prize health, and to improve it for the good of their ſouls, to lay up againſt an evil day, and to ſtock themſelves with grace before ſickneſs come. She would frequently ſay, *O the benefit of health! O prize health! praiſe God for health, and improve health for your eternal good.*

5. She was very well vers'd in the Scriptures. The Law of God was her *delight, and this kept her from periſhing in her affliction.* She was continually fetching Cordials out of the Word, to comfort her under her great pains, and to preſerve her from fainting. The 12*th* of the *Hebrews* was a precious Cordial unto

unto her, ſo was the 8*th* of the *Romans*, and the 2*d* of the *Corinthians*, the 4*th* chapter, and the 17, 18. verſes. *For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,*

While we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen; for the things which are ſeen, are temporal; but the things that are not ſeen, are eternal.

1 Cor. 15. 53, 54, 55, 56, 57.

For this corruptible muſt put on incorruption; and this mortal, muſt put on immortality.

So when this corruptible ſhall have put on incorruption, and this mortal ſhall have put on immortality; then ſhall be brought to paſs the ſaying that is written, Death is ſwallowed up in victory.

O death, where is thy ſting? O grave where is thy victory?

The ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the Law.

But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Phil. 3. 21. *Who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like*

unto

unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to ſubdue all things unto himſelf.

A little before her death ſhe ſaid, *In the Lord Jehovah there is righteouſneſs and ſtrength*, righteouſneſs for *juſtification*, and ſtrength for *ſupportation*. She ſaid, that the *Word of God was the beſt Cordial in the world:* And that one minutes being in Heaven, would make amends for *all her pain and miſery.*

6. And laſtly, I cannot but take ſpecial notice of the happy cloſe of her life, and of the bleſſed end ſhe made. It is ſaid of *Job*, James 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have ſeen the end of the Lord*, &c. This our Chriſtian Siſter did in a great meaſure partake both of *Jobs pains*, and *Jobs patience*; and made as happy an end, as he did, though in another kind. In the morning of that day in which ſhe died, ſhe fell into a ſlumber, in which ſhe heard (as ſhe thought) one ſaying to her, *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* Immediately ſhe awaked full of joy, and though hardly able to ſpeak, yet ſhe

ſhe uttered it to thoſe who ſtood by, and was much comforted with it. Now though I am far from putting any confidence in *dreams*, and doubt not *that a man may dream he ſhall go to Heaven, and yet be caſt into Hell.* Though I do not think *that comfortable dreams are ſufficient evidences of ſalvation*, (Nay, when they are brought as proofs of *erronious opinions*, I account them *Diabolical deluſions*; and when wicked men have them, *pleaſant Preſumptions.*) Yet notwithſtanding when a Woman who hath ſpent many years in the ſervice of God, and is viſited by God for above a year, with great and moſt grievous pains, ſhall at the cloſe of her life (when ſhe is upon the very brink of Eternity) have ſuch a *ſweet, refreſhing, and heart-chearing impreſſion upon her ſpirit*; when heart fails, and fleſh fails: When ſhe can hardly ſpeak to expreſs the greatneſs of her joy, then to hear a voice (as it were) ſaying to her, *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* This (in all probability) was *the voice of God, and not of man. This was the Lords doing, and it is marvellous*

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in our eyes. I forbear ſaying any more. She is gone from a Priſon to a Palace; from a Purgatory to a Paradiſe. She is at *reſt with God, where all tears are wiped away from her eyes.* The Lord fit us by his Grace to follow her in due time into the Kingdom of Glory. *Amen.*

Mrs. *Elizabeth Moore's* EVIDENCES for HEAVEN.

Collected by her ſelf in the time of her health, in ſuch manner and method, as they are here preſented to Publick view.

1. Her *Deſign* in this *Collection.*

IN the Examination of my ſelf, I find that my Aims and Ends, why I deſire to gather together, and clear up my *Evidences* for Heaven (if my deceitful heart doth not deceive me) are theſe following:

1. That

The first Design.

1. That hereby (as a means) I may be inabled to glorifie God in *the great work of believing*; that hereby (with Gods blessing) the dim eye of my Faith may more clearly see the Lord Jesus Christ to be a *Peace-maker*, and *Reconciler*, and *Surety*, for *me*, even for *me*, who am by Nature a Fire-brand of Hell. The time was, I am sure, when I was the *Devils* Picture, and had the *black brand of Reprobation* upon me; and therefore it doth nearly concern me to search and try what *Evidences* I have to prove that God (fetching Arguments out of his own bowels, and the riches of his free grace) hath redeemed me out of this lost estate.

The second Design.

2. My *Aim* is to strengthen that longed-for grace of *Assurance*. A grace, which though it be not of absolute necessity for the *being* and *salvation*, yet is of absolute necessity for the *well-being* and *consolation* of a Christian; without this grace I can neither live nor die comfortably; and I have been often exhorted by Gods faithful *Ambassadors*, to gather together my Scripture E-

vidences,

videnees, and to have the approbation of ſome Godly and Experienced Miniſter or Chriſtian; and this by Gods bleſſing may be a means to ſtrengthen Aſſurance: Yea, I find in Scripture, that the Lord ſaith, that *the Prieſts lips ſhall preſerve knowledg, and thou ſhalt ſeek the Law at his mouth, for he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts.* Mal. 3. 7.

3. My *Aim* is to obey God in his Word, who hath commanded me by his Apoſtle, *To work out my own ſalvation with fear and trembling*; *and to give all diligence to make my calling and election ſure*: And I am exhorted *to examine my ſelf, and prove my ſelf, whether I be in the faith or no: Know ye not* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that Chriſt is in you, except ye be reprobates*: *And if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new Creature*; *old things are paſſed away, and all things are become new.* The third Deſign. Phil 2.12 2 Pet. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 13. 5.

Now then to prove whether I be indeed and in truth born again, is my deſire at this time, the Lord help me, and give me a ſincere and upright heart, and guide me herein by his holy Spirit, for the ho-

nour of his Holy Name.

2. A brief *Collection* of her *Evidences* for *Heaven.*

First Evidence. Bleſſed be God, who hath through his free mercy *begotten me to a hope*, that I am *regenerated and born from above, and converted unto God.*

Reaſon, Becauſe the Lord hath gone the ſame uſual way with me, as with thoſe he pleaſeth to convert to himſelf; and this I ſhall make to appear in five or ſix particulars.

1 The Lord by his Spirit accompanying the Preaching of his Word, cauſed the ſcales to fall from my eyes, and opened them, and ſet up a clear light in my underſtanding, and made me to ſee *ſin to be exceeding ſinful*, out of meaſure ſinful, and to look on it as the loathſomeſt thing in the world, and on my ſelf as a loathſome creature in Gods ſight, and in my own ſight, by reaſon of the Leproſie of ſin, wherewith I was over-run.

2. The Lord brought me to ſee the *miſery* that I was in, by reaſon of my ſins. I thought I was utterly forſaken of God, and I thought that

that God would never accept of ſuch a wretch as I ſaw my ſelf to be. I could not think otherwiſe, but that hell was my portion, and that I, by reaſon of my ſins, muſt go thither; expecting every day when the Lord would glorifie himſelf in my damnation. I ſaw my ſelf in more miſery, becauſe of my ſins, than I could then, or now expreſs to any body. I looked upon God as a *conſuming fire*, and on my ſelf as *ſtubble*, ready to be conſumed by him, *&c.*

3. The Lord brought me to a ſpiritual aſtoniſhment, that I cryed out, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* And ſaid with *Paul*, *Lord! what wouldſt thou have me to do?* Do but make known to thy poor creature what thy will is, and I thought I could do any thing, or ſuffer any thing for the Lord. But ſince I have had ſome more knowledg of the holy Will of God, woe is me! What a barren and unfruitful heart have I! A heart that can neither do nor ſuffer any thing for the Lord as I onght to do: But this I can ſay, that the aſtoniſhment I was in by

the ſight of my ſins, and the miſery I was plunged into, put me on the *performance of holy duties*, eſpecially *prayer*.

4. The Lord took me off my own *bottom*, off my own righteouſneſs, and made me to ſee that, that was but a *ſandy foundation*, and would not hold out. I was not taken off from the performance of holy duties; no, I thought with my ſelf that I am commanded by God, to perform holy duties, which is the way and means whereby we may meet with God. (For he is ordinarily to be injoyed no where but in his own Ordinances). But the Lord took me off from reſting and truſting in Ordinances. And as he made me to ſee, that without the practiſe of them he would not accept of me; ſo alſo he made me to know, that it was not for holy duties, for which I was accepted. The ſins that cleave to my beſt performances, are enough, for which the Lord may juſtly condemn me, if I had no other ſins.

5. The Lord brought me to ſee a *Superlative beauty and excellency in the*

the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and my ſoul was deeply in love with him, even with whole Chriſt in all his offices, and (if I know any thing at all of my own heart) I deſired Chriſt as much to be my King and Prophet, to teach and guide me, and ſubdue me to himſelf, and rule over me, as to be my *High Prieſt*, to make Atonement by offering up of himſelf for me, and waſhing me in his blood, by which I muſt be juſtified.

6. The Lord brought me to ſee a *ſoul-ſatisfaction* in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt alone; and I think I ſhould be as fully ſatisfied with Chriſt alone, as my heart can deſire. If I know my heart, it panteth after Chriſt, and Chriſt alone: *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt.* The whole world in compariſon or competition with Chriſt, is nothing to me: but in him I ſee full contentment. To ſee and know my intereſt in him, and to enjoy communion with him, is that, which if the Lord would beſtow upon me, I ſhould with *Jacob* ſay, *It is enough*; and with old *Simeon*, *Now let thy*

ſervant depart in peace, for my eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.

Now I deſire to ſet down ſome other Scripture-Evidences, that I find upon ſearch and examination of my heart, by laying it to the Rule, the Word of God.

Second Evidence

My ſecond Scripture-Evidence is taken from *Mark* 2. 17. where Chriſt ſaith, *They that are whole, have no need of the Phyſician, but they that are ſick*; and *he came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.* Now through Gods mercy I can ſay that I am a *ſin-ſick-ſinner* (the Lord make me more ſick) I am not righteous in mine own eyes, but a ſinner, and ſee my ſelf undone for ever, without the righteouſneſs of Chriſt be imputed to me; and therefore I hope I am among the number of thoſe whom Chriſt was commiſſionated by his Father to come to ſave.

Third Evidence

From *Matth.* 11. 28, 29. I am *weary and heavy laden*; now Chriſt hath promiſed to *give eaſe* to ſuch. And I am willing to *take his yoke upon me*, and would fain learn of him the leſſon of meekneſs and low-

lowlineſs, and therefore am invited to *come unto him.*

I can ſay with *David*, that my ſins are a *heavy burden* to me, they are too *heavy for me*, Pſal. 38. 4. and I can ſay, that I mourn, becauſe I can mourn no more for my ſins; now Chriſt ſaith, *Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted*, Mat. 5. 4. Fourth Evidence

From *Mat.* 5. 3. I think (if my heart do not deceive me) I am *poor in ſpirit*; *now theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, ſaith Chriſt. Fifth Evidence

From *Mat.* 12. 20. I am a *bruiſed reed, and ſmoaking flax*; and therefore Chriſt hath promiſed, he will not break ſuch a reed, nor quench the ſmoak of grace, if it be true grace, but he will increaſe it more and more (as he ſaith) *until judgment break forth into victory:* And he came to ſet at *liberty* them that are *bruiſed*, Luk. 4. 18. Therefore I hope I am ſuch a one as he came to *bind up* and ſet at *liberty*; Yea, and that he was *annointed* and ſent by his Father to me, and ſuch as I am, *Iſa.* 61. 1. Sixth Evidence

From 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *This is a faithful* Seventh Evidence

ful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation (ſaith *Paul*) *That Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners:* And ſo ſay I too; it is worthy all acceptation, that Chriſt ſhould come from the boſom of his Father, who was infinitely glorious and happy, that he ſhould come into the world to ſave *me, me a ſinner, me the chief of ſinners*; me, that if ſaved, I do verily believe, there is none in Heaven, nor any that ever ſhall come thither, that hath or will have the cauſe to *magnifie and adore free-grace*, as I ſhall have. And herein doth God commend his love towards me. *For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his life*, Rom. 5. 10.

Eighth Evidence

I can ſay with *Paul*, that I *delight in the Law of God, after the inward man*, and I am grieved that I cannot keep it. I find that ſpiritual war in me, between *fleſh* and *ſpirit*, which *Paul* complaineth of, and I can ſay, that *Paul* doth confeſs over my heart in his confeſſions, *Rom.* 7. And I can go along withhim there, from verſ. 9. to the end

end of the chapter; and from hence I gather, that there is ſome ſpiritual life in my ſoul, and an endeavour to walk after the ſpirit, and therefore I hope and deſire to conclude with him, that there ſhall be *no condemnation to me*, but that the *Law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall make me free from the Law of ſin and death.* I find an earneſt deſire wrought in my ſoul, to be made like unto Jeſus Chriſt, and that it may be my *meat* and *drink* to do and ſuffer his will, as he would have me. Rom. 8 1, 2.

I can ſay, that the Lord hath in ſome meaſure put his fear into my heart, that I fear to offend him, out of love to him, and I love to fear him. Ninth Evidence

I can ſay with the Church to Chriſt, *Cant.* 1. 7. *O thou whom my ſoul loveth!* (and if I know any thing at all of mine own heart) Chriſt is *altogether lovely*, and moſt deſirable to my ſoul. Tenth Evidence

I think I can truly ſay with *David*, *That I have none in Heaven but thee, and there is nothing on earth that I deſire beſides thee, in compariſon* of

thee, in *competition* with thee. Though all that is dearest to me in the world should forsake me, yet if God whom I have chosen for my *Portion* will not forsake me, I have enough. It is my desire and endeavour more and more to *account all things but loss and dung*, that I may win Christ. I can with *Peter* make my appeal to him, and say, Lord, thou who *knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*, and that it is the desire of my soul to love thee more, and to love thee for thy self, because thou art holy, and good, and gracious, and *the chiefest amongst ten thousand*; Yea God in Christ alone, is worthy to be beloved, and it is my *highest priviledg* that he will give me leave to love him, who only can satisfie my soul, and *redeem* it from death eternal, who hath justified me by his blood. and sanctified me by his Spirit; whom therefore I love *with all my heart, and all my soul, and all my might, and all my strength.* Finding therefore, that God hath drawn out my heart to love him, and make choice of him alone; I from hence gather

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and ground my hope, that God loveth me, according to that Scripture, 1 *Joh.* 4. 14. *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.*

I find my heart much inflamed with love to all the Children of God, *becauſe they are Gods Children*; and the more I ſee, or find, or hear of God in them, the more I find my heart cleaving to them; and I think I can truly ſay with *David*, That *my delight is in the Saints, and thoſe that excell in grace*; not becauſe they are friends to me, or I have relation to them, in regard of outward obligations, but becauſe they bear the image of God upon them, and manifeſt it in their Holy converſation. I love them, whether rich, or poor. And though I did never know ſome of them, but only hear of their holineſs, and piety, yet I could not but exceedingly love ſuch. Therefore I hope that *I am paſſed from death to life, becauſe I love the Brethren*, 1 Joh. 3. 14. Eleventh Evidence.

I do not only love God, and the Children of God, but I labour to *keep his Commandments*, and they are not *grievous to me*. But I pray Twelfth Evidence 1 Joh. 5. 3.

with

Pſal. 119. 5. v. 32, 34. with *David*, *O that my wayes were directed to keep thy Statutes! Lord inlarge my heart, and I will run the wayes of thy Commandments. Give me underſtanding, and I ſhall keep thy Law, yea, I ſhall obſerve it with my whole heart; for therein do I delight.*

Thirteenth Evidence. I find I am one that is very thirſty after Jeſus Chriſt, and the grace of Chriſt; and I thirſt to have his image more and more ſtamped upon me; and I would fain be aſſured by Gods Spirit, that I am *tranſplanted into Chriſt*, and therefore I long, and endeavour after a true and *lively Faith*, becauſe that Grace is a *ſoul-tranſplanting and uniting Grace*. Now Chriſt hath promiſed to ſatisfie the *thirſty*, Mat. 5. 6. and ſuch Chriſt hath earneſtly invited to come, though they have nothing to bring but what may make againſt themſelves, yet to come *empty*, and he hath promiſed to *fill them*, Iſa. 55. 1, 2.

Fourteenth Evidence. I am willing to *confeſs*, and with all my heart to forſake all my ſins. I am willing to give glory to God, in taking ſhame unto my ſelf. I acknow-

acknowledg my ſelf a guilty Male-factor, and judg my ſelf worthy of the juſt condemnation of the righteous Judg of all the Earth. And I do not only confeſs my ſins, but with all my heart I deſire to forſake them, and to turn to the Lord: Now he hath ſaid, he *will have mercy* on ſuch, and will *abundantly pardon them: For his thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways.* Iſa. 55. 7, 8. It is my conſtant endeavour, to die to ſin, to live to newneſs of life. And this is my comfort and hope, that he who hath begun a good work in me, will perfect it. For it is he that *worketh all our works in us, and for us*, Iſa. 26. 12. and he that hath wrought in me to *will* to do that which is pleaſing in his ſight, will work in me to *do* alſo, and that of his good pleaſure, *Phil.* 2. 13.

I hope I am one whom God hath taken into Covenant with himſelf, becauſe he hath beſtowed upon me the fruits of the Covenant, becauſe he hath *circumciſed my heart* to love him, and hath put his *fear into me*, and hath wrought an univerſal change Fifteenth Evidence

change in me; and hath given me a *new heart*, and a *new ſpirit*; yea his own ſpirit which he hath put within me, even the *Spirit of Truth*, *which will guide me into all Truth.* It is his own Promiſe to *give his Holy Spirit to them that ask it of him* (as I have done often) *Luk.* 11. 13. and I hope that God will make it in his due time, a *witneſſing*, and a *comforting-Spirit.* I will wait upon him for the accompliſhment of all his Promiſes, both *of* Grace, and *to* Grace. He hath ſaid, he will be a *Sun* and a *Shield*, he will *give Grace and Glory, and no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly.* And he hath promiſed to ſubdue our ſins for us; and hath ſaid, *That ſin ſhall not have dominion over us*, Rom. 6. 14. *That he will be our God, and we ſhall be his children; and he will ſave us from all our uncleannеſſes*, I hope I have a ſhare in this bleſſed Covenant of free Grace.

Sixteenth Evidence. As for my *Affliction* that lyeth upon me (though it be in it ſelf very heavy) I much more deſire the *ſanctification* of it, than the *removal.*

I

I earneſtly labour to learn all thoſe leſſons which God teacheth me by *Affliction*. I know I ſhould not be ſcourged, nor be in tribulation, but that I have need of it; *it is for my profit, to make me partaker of his holineſs*. Afflictions are an Evidence of *Sonſhip*, Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8. God hath promiſed, *that all things ſhall work together for good to them that love and fear him*. And I have had much experience of his faithfulneſs, who hath not ſuffered me to be tempted above what he hath enabled me to bear; *therefore I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him*. He hath chaſtiſed me leſs than mine iniquities deſerve. He chaſtiſeth me here, that he may not condemn me hereafter.

Faith is the Condition of Salvation: *Believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved. And this is his Commandment, that we ſhould believe in his Son Jeſus Chriſt*. Now I find nothing ſo hard to me as to believe aright; to caſt away all my own *righteouſneſs* as dung, in point of Juſtification; and to caſt away all

Seventeenth Evidence. Act. 16. 31. 1 Joh. 3. 23.

all my *unrighteouſneſs*, ſo as that be no bar to me, and to role, and caſt, and venture my immortal ſoul upon Jeſus Chriſt and his Righteouſneſs, for life and ſalvation by him alone, and to ſee my ſelf compleat in him; this is ſupernatural. Yet I muſt and will give glory to God, and ſay, *Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief.* And by this I prove, that this precious Grace of Faith is wrought in me, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt is to me very precious: and I find
1 Pet. 2. 7. in the Word, that *to them that believe he is precious*: and I am willing to take Chriſt upon his own terms, as he is tendred in the Goſpel; and am willing to give up my ſelf, ſoul and body, wholly to him; and my love to God, and to the Children of God, is a fruit of my Faith, as alſo my deſire to be made like unto him: *For he that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure*, 1 John 3. 3. *And I truſt that I am kept by the power of God, through faith unto ſalvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5 *I know whom I have believed,*
2 Tim. 1. 12. *and I am perſwaded that he is able and willing to keep that which I have com-*

committed unto him, which is my immortal ſoul.

Thus I have, according to the Apoſtles exhortation, endeavoured to give a *reaſon of the hope that is in me*. What have I, but what I have received? The deſire of my ſoul is, that God may have all the Glory: And if I be deceived, the Lord for Chriſts ſake undeceive me, and grant that if I have not true Grace, I may not think I have, and ſo be in a *Fools Paradiſe*. And the Lord that is my *Heart-maker*, be my *Heart-ſearcher*, and my *Heart-diſcoverer*, and my *Heart-reformer*. AMEN.

FINIS.

Books Printed, and are to be ſold by *John Hancock*, at the firſt Shop in *Popes-head-Alley* at the three Bibles; Who ſells all ſorts of Divinity-Books, &c. to Chapmen, or others.

TWelve Books lately publiſhed by Mr. Thomas Brooks, *late Preacher of the Goſpel at* Margarets New *Fiſh-ſtreet.*

1. *Precious Remedies* againſt Satans devices; *Or*, Salve for Believers and Unbelievers ſores; being a companion for thoſe that are in Chriſt, or out of Chriſt, that ſlight or neglect Ordinances, under a pretence of living above them; that are growing in Spirituals, or decaying; that are tempted, or deſerted; afflicted, or oppoſed; that have aſſurance, or want it; on 2 *Cor.* 2. 11.

2. *Heaven on Earth*; Or a ſerious Diſcourſe touching a well-grounded Aſſurance of mans everlaſting hap-

happineſs and bleſſedneſs; diſcovering the nature of aſſurance, the poſſibility of attaining it, the Cauſes, Springs and degrees of it, with the reſolution of ſeveral weighty Queſtions on the 8. of the *Romans*, 32, 33, 34. *verſes*.

3. *The unſearchable Riches of Chriſt*: Or Meat for ſtrong Men, and Milk for Babes, held forth in two and twenty Sermons, from *Epheſ.* 3. 8: Preached on his Lecture-nights at *Fiſhſtreet-hill*.

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With the Young Mans Objections anſwered, and the Old Mans Doubts reſolved.

5. *A String of Pearls*: Or, The beſt things reſerved till laſt; delivered in a Sermon Preached in *London*, *June* 8. 1657, at the Funeral of that Triumphant Saint Mrs. *Mary Blake*, late Wife to his worthy Friend Mr. *Nicholas Blake*, Merchant.

6. *The*

6. *The Mute Christian; with Soveraign Antidotes against the most miserable Exigents:* Or, a Christian with an Olive-leaf in his mouth, when he is under the greatest afflictions, the sharpest and sorest trials and troubles, the saddest and darkest Providences and Changes.

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1 The *Chriſtian Man's Calling*; or a Treatiſe of making Religion ones buſineſs, in *Religious Duties*, *Natural actions*, his *Particular Vocation*, his *Family Directions*, and his own *Recreations*; to be read in Families for their Inſtruction and Edification. The firſt Part.

2 Likewiſe a ſecond Part; wherein Chriſtians are directed to perform their Duties, as Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Maſters and Servants, in the conditions of Proſperity and Adverſity.

3 The third and laſt part of the *Chriſtian*

Chriſtian Mans Calling, wherein the Chriſtian is directed how to make Religion his buſineſs, in his dealings with all Men, in the Choice of his Companions, in his carriage in good Company, in bad Company, in ſolitarineſs, or when he is alone, on a week-day from morning to night, in viſiting the ſick on a Dying-bed; as alſo the means how a Chriſtian may do this, and ſome motives to it.

4. The *Door of Salvation opened*, by the *Key of Regeneration.*

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